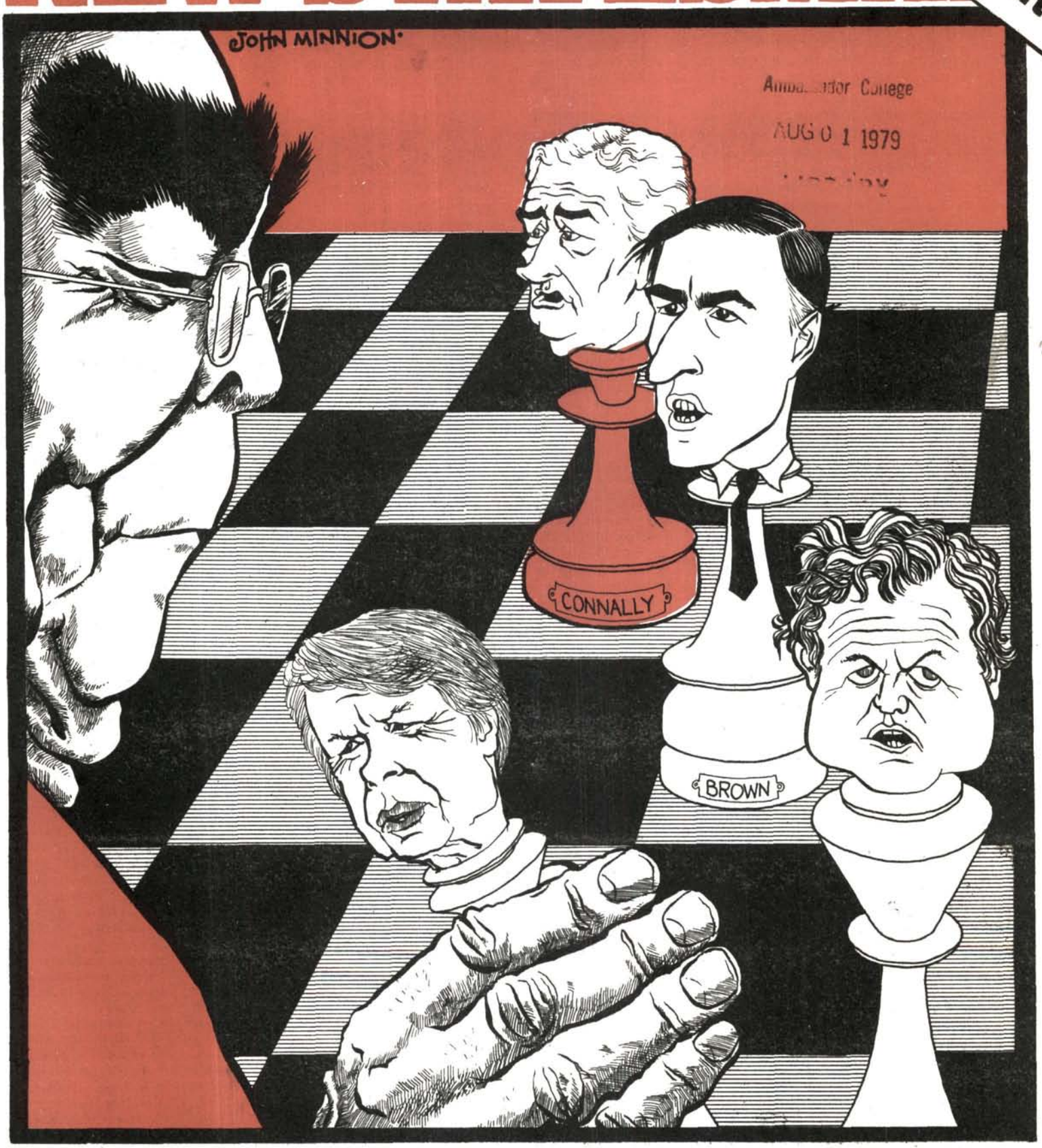
29 June 1979 35p USA $1 By Air

NEW STATESMAN

Slideshow Part 3



Ambassador College
AUG 0 1 1979

A Soviet hand in the Presidential Game

Jeremy Thorpe and the State

Ronald Fraser's 'Blood of Spain'

John Coleman on Thrillers

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Emancipating Labour

THE CONSERVATIVE PRESS is so mortified by the idea that Labour might pick its leadership through convention rather than conclave that it has even denounced an attempt to discuss the matter. What is all the fuss about? Labour's organisation committee has asked annual conference to consider reselection of MPs – a topic aborted several times by union domination of the agenda – and also to debate the setting up of an 'electoral college' to pick the party leader and front bench spokesmen. Many socialists and social democratic parties in Europe, North America and Australia already practice a version of this method. Only a country as conservative as Britain, where the Tories have only twice voted for a leader even among MPs, and where Jeremy Thorpe got the Liberal leadership by the votes of six single individuals, could find such a proposal 'undemocratic'.

There are, or there used to be, certain telling arguments against. Principally, they revolve around the question of 'bringing on new talent' and giving young men and women of ability a boost. But our system of mushrooming Prime Ministerial patronage has made a mockery of this reasoning. As matters now stand, MPs and party figures have almost no counterweight to the vast number of discretionary appointments, inside and outside Parliament, which a Premier can command.

It is impossible to maintain that this system has been used to advance young talent. So far from that, it has bred a crop of utter mediocrities and sycophants; never more so than under James Callaghan. Other Prime Ministers in the past have been known to stoop as far as using it to prefer their personal and business acquaintances, in a manner far exceeding their real deserts. This convenience, coupled with the vast growth of the power of the permanent executive branch, has all but insulated decision making from democratic scrutiny.

Within the party itself the situation is not much better. A succession of obviously rigged and bungled conferences has seen the issue of inner-party democracy consigned to the Greek Kalends year after year. And if the spectacle of a Labour Prime Minister dishing out perks is repugnant, then the sight of a Labour Opposition leader awarding make-believe portfolios is merely absurd. Fred Mulley, who was thought good enough to serve in the Cabinet, is at long last revealed as a man not fit even for a shadow post. Peter Shore, an admirable man, wholly innocent of any interest or background in Foreign Affairs, is expected to contest the subtleties of Thatcher's African sellout. To roars of respectful applause from the lobby, every 'socialist' is 'balanced' by a 'moderate'. Here we go again.

Cromwell was right. If we are to make a good stand against gentlemen of spirit, we cannot rely on a force of decayed serving-men and tapsters. On this Benn and his cothinkers deserve support.

NOTES

Crossing the Dickson-Mabon line

Brian Wilson writes: As Labour candidate in Inverness-shire, I was in touch during the General Election with Dr J. Dickson Mabon, then Minister of State at the Department of Energy, about the future of the McDermott oil-platform yard at Ardersier. McDermott found themselves in direct competition for a £30m. order to be placed by Shell – Esso in respect of the North Cormorant field in the North Sea. Their opponents, who eventually won the order, were Redpath De Groot Caledonian, who have a yard at Methil in Fife.

McDermott management were – genuinely I believe – astonished to lose the order. Four hundred men had to be made redundant at Ardersier as a result of the order's loss. It had been generally believed in the industry for some time that McDermott would build the North Cormorant platform. I contacted Dr Mabon to seek his comments on persistent suggestions that McDermott were the victims of unfair competition. He stressed that the Government could only help to ensure that work stayed in Britain: they could not direct oil companies to any particular yard. He assured me that there was no question of unfair competition.

Redpath De Groot Caledonian have a heavy Dutch involvement and are linked to a Cherbourg-based firm, UIL, to bid for platform orders. Their opponents McDermott made no secret of the belief that the Redpath – UIL consortium had benefited from French subsidies, contrary to EEC rules to which the Labour government and the EEC were turning a blind eye. When that order finally went to that consortium it was widely claimed that strong government pressure had been exerted on Shell-Esso – the fact that there were more Labour voters to be won in Fife than in the Highlands was assumed to underly this pressure. On the basis of Dr Mabon's assurances, I relayed the message that there was no foundation to these allegations and that Ardersier had lost out on the basis of fair competition.

It may well be that this interpretation of events was entirely well-founded. However, seven weeks later Dr Mabon was reincarnated as non-executive chairman of Redpath De Groot Caledonian, at a salary coyly reported to be measured in 'five figures'. Mr David Waterstone, his predecessor who continues as non-executive vice-chairman commented last week:' I am hopeful that we will be profitable this year but getting orders is a hard slog and Dr Mabon will be able to help in this'.

According to sources in the Energy Department, the destination of a major platform order would inevitably involve the Minister in discussions with the oil company placing the order. It is also known that Dr Mabon, quite understandably, took a close day to day interest in the destination of the North Cormorant order.

When James Callaghan selected Bruce Millan as Shadow Scottish Secretary, Dr Mabon was bitterly disappointed; with the backing of the Manifesto Group, of which he was a founder member and past Chairman, Dr Mabon had gained 20 votes more than Mr Millan in the shadow cabinet elections. Three days after his non-appointment, his recruitment by the oil-related company was announced. It is not necessary to suggest that anything untoward occurred in order to question this kind of transition from government to private enterprise, within the area of activity that the Ministerial portfolio covered: it is sufficient to say that an absence of vested interest should be seen to exist.

Muldergate reaches the internal settlement

David Pallister and David Beresford write: South Africa's now defunct Department of Information has been providing secret financial assistance to the party which was formed to assume power in Rhodesia, Bishop Muzorewa's United African National Congress. The Rhodesian project which was one of the most expensive and sensitive of the Muldergate operations, adds an intriguing new dimension to the current crisis in the UANC, caused by the defection of eight MPs led by the Party Vice-President, James Chikerema. The split has left the Bishop without a majority in Parliament.

Mr Chikerema was the man who received 400,000 rand (over a quarter of a million pounds) from the Department of Information working in collaboration with the Bureau of State Security. Details of the pay-outs have been disclosed by a number of sources including in outline by Eschel Rhoodie, SA former Secretary of Information, and in detail by a South African businessman who was involved in the operation.

Another 400,000 rand was paid to a second black politician involved in the internal settlement. It has not been satisfactorily established who received this money but it has been claimed by at least one highly placed source that it went to Bishop Muzorewa. Both payments were made in early 1978 through a secret account at a Swiss Bank. There is no evidence that Mr Chikerema was aware that the South African government was the source of the money – he was in fact informed that the money came from a consortium of sympathetic South African businessmen. But South Africa went to considerable lengths to obtain evidence that the payment had been made, it is believed, to put pressure on Mr Chikerema, if necessary at a later date. According to the South African businessman – who has asked that his name not be used because he says he has now severed his links with the South African government and does not want his business life damaged – the Department of Information chose Mr Chikerema as the target for their main favours in the belief that he was a far more ruthless and astute politician than Bishop Muzorewa and would inevitably take over the leadership of the party and of the country. Mr Chikerema, a former guerrilla leader, accepted the internal settlement in late 1977. Having denounced Muzorewa for 'tribalism, nepotism and dictatorship', Chikerema last week led eight MPs out of the UANC. Chikerema's room for further manoeuvre may be limited by the Botha government. It was decided by the South Africans that some politically compromising material on Mr Chikerema should be obtained to ensure that after taking power he would live up to his assurances of friendship with South Africa.

To this end the businessman, who had previously acted as a secret agent for the South African government was sent to Salisbury to meet Mr Chikerema and obtain promises of further cooperation. The office where the meeting was held, he says, was bugged by BOSS and the recordings are being held in Pretoria. In the course of the meeting the businessman obtained assurances from Mr Chikerema that Rhodesia would enter a customs and currency union with South Africa, that diplomatic ties would be maintained and that South Africa would retain over-flying rights in Rhodesia.

Hong Kong's foot people

Brian Beckett and Terry Pattinson write: Behind Mrs Thatcher's decision to send up to 1000 more troops to Hong Kong lies a deeper tragedy than the

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well publicised plight of the Vietnamese boat people. While about 10 Vietnamese junks – holding as many as 300 people each – arrive each day, the number of *intercepted* illegal immigrants from the People's Republic of China has grown from about 50 to around 450 per day in the last six months. David J. Roads, Information Officer for the Hong Kong Government, points to a housing estate accommodating 48,000 and says that the authorities would have to build four similar ones each year if everyone seeking admission to the Crown Colony were to be let in. He also mentions that – while the people of Hong Kong feel sorry for all refugees – there is a real fear of living standards being eroded through an influx of cheap labour and the overtaxing of social services, which have already reached the limit of their capabilities.

Hong Kong is currently trying to recruit up to 50 per cent more harbour police to control the flood of 'illegals' as the refugees are known. Undercover agents are also in demand to penetrate the rapidly increasing number of criminal and semi-criminal organisations making vast profits from the trade in illegal immigration. Recently, one captain simply pointed his refugee laden ship at Hong Kong Island – which lies just outside the harbour – and went overboard with his profits in a small boat, leaving his passengers to fend for themselves as the vessel went ashore. The captain and his first mate were captured by police a few days later but the fate of the money is uncertain.

Hong Kong's would-be citizens are coming for two distinct reasons. Those crossing over from the People's Republic are generally seeking the 'good life' and the Western lifestyle they imagine to lie across the border. Since the Chinese claim to intercept en route as many as the British capture and return, there are something like 900 arrests per day. In addition, for each illegal captured and returned to China, up to three succeed in making it into Hong Kong where they simply disappear into the population. On the other hand, the boat people are fleeing what they think will be a certain death for whatever chance they might have to reach sanctuary. Most of them are of Chinese extraction and middle class; many are former refugees from the North who sought sanctuary in South Vietnam.

Hong Kong officials are becoming disturbed at what appears to be an alarming increase in violent incidents in encounters with illegals from the People's Republic. Many now carry home-made weapons and use them when stopped by police or troops. There are some strong rumours in China itself about the ill-treatment of captured Chinese. Police deny this: officially captured illegals are detained for only a few hours before climbing aboard a dark blue, unmarked Bedford truck for the journey back to the Chinese border. The whole procedure is a lot quieter now; the trucks are unmarked and the jeering Chinese rent-a-crowd that used to greet the returnees is absent. First time offenders now only face a severe reprimand when sent back and just about all will try it once again. Only third-time failures now face the prospect of a re-education centre.

Tories cover up for the brewers

Roger Protz writes: The Price Commission's final fling – a report on Whitbread, the giant brewing combine – looks like the *Rhodesia Herald* shortly after UDI, with the text broken up by the censor's white space. The censor in this case was Tory Trade Secretary John Nott, who slashed many of the Commission's more scathing comments on the brewers. Nott apparently decided that the comments were 'not in the public interest' and wielded the blue pencil to excise such interesting information as that a brand new £35m. lager brewery in South Wales will not come into production for some time because Whitbread have nothing to brew there. The Commission said: 'The decision to build a further brewery at Magor was understandable in the circumstances of the time when it was taken and we do not seek to criticise its timing or wisdom. However the recent development of high-gravity brewing permits the capacity of the two larger breweries at Samlesbury, near Preston, and Luton to be increased by some 25 per cent.' This passage is followed by a blank space, thought to contain the damaging information that Whitbread had so miscalculated the demand for lager that they do not need the Magor brewery at all in the forseeable future.

Whitbread are the most hawkish of the big brewers where lager is concerned. They are convinced that the overpriced and immensely profitable continental-style beer will command 40 per cent of the market by the mid-1980s and designed Magor with a capacity of 1.7m. barrels a year. But the growth of lager has slowed and some experts think it will struggle to reach 30 per cent of the market. Magor has been further undermined by Whitbread's switch to the new technique of 'high-gravity brewing': instead of brewing different brands of lager the Preston and Luton plants now produce one extra strong brew that is then watered down into different varieties.

John Nott cut several other points from the report. The Commission attacked Whibread's prices and increased returns from gaming machines and pub rents. It is thought that both Whitbread and Bass, the subject of a separate report, were criticised for the massive loans they make to so-called 'free trade' pubs and clubs. Such outlets are supposedly free of the brewers' tie but the increasing use of cash inducements by the big brewers in return for a commitment to take their products has meant that many such pubs and clubs have become virtu-

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ally tied houses. The Commission was particularly critical of the strong-arm tactic of linking loans to 'barrelage', which means the money is paid on the basis of each outlet reaching a certain sales target. The Commission felt this method was uncompetitive and needed further examination.

A helping hand for property developers

Rick Rogers writes: Education Secretary Mark Carlisle's approval this week of ILEA's plan to close two Waterloo primary schools clears more ground for the property developers' take-over of London's South Bank (see 'On the Waterfront', NS 25 May 1979). It also dispels any illusions that a Tory government would rescue communities fighting to keep open local schools threatened with permanent closure.

Before the election, the national Tory PR machine, headed by Norman St John Stevas and Stuart Sexton (Carlisle's new political adviser) made much of closures, infiltrating local campaigns and putting it about that a Tory government would protect small schools as it would protect small businesses. Watch out small businesses – the policy change over schools has been impressively fast.

What now for the Waterloo schools? The local community has a mere five weeks to come up with a further delaying tactic – and it is being prevented from seeing the details of the Education Secretary's approval of the closures. Both ILEA and the DES claim it is the other's duty to provide them. The only ploy open to the campaigners now is to protest at the unreasonable amount of time left for parents to resettle their children in other schools satisfactorily and for teachers to find other jobs.

Meanwhile the Heron property group has withdrawn from the public enquiry into the future development of the South Bank. It claims the enquiry is taking up too much of its time and money – and is reconsidering its proposals for the area.The local community action groups, already angry at the 'biased and farcical' way the enquiry is being conducted, believe the property companies are trying to bypass the enquiry and sort out the development contracts in private.

THORPE TRIAL
John Shirley

The Thorpe saga again exposes our security services to ridicule

MI5's 'character defect'

THE THORPE TRIAL will have served one useful purpose if it moves Britain's preposterous security services one stage closer to the scrapheap. Last year, the spooks consumed a vast amount of public money oppressing two young journalists and a social worker, whom they accused unsuccessfully of being a danger to the state. It now seems clear that they spent several years failing to do anything useful about the fact that Jeremy Thorpe, a senior and well-connected politician, was a highly conspicuous security risk.

One point must be stated clearly, before plunging into a complex narrative and perhaps more complex argument. Thorpe's fatal peculiarity was *not* that he had homosexual tendencies – but that he was ferociously determined to deny those tendencies, and was ready to undertake a great deal of lying and bullying in order to make other people accept his denials. Had he been an ordinary civil servant, he would long ago have been stopped in his tracks: the victim of what Whitehall reports still icily refer to as a 'character defect'. He would scarcely have been promoted beyond the level of assistant draftsman. But as a blessed child of the Establishment, he was able to become the leader of his party, a Privy Councillor – and come within inches of being a Cabinet minister.

How was all this possible? How was it that two Prime Ministers were able to throw their weight behind him at critical moments in his campaign to attain and hold political power (Heath in 1974 with the offer of a coalition government post: Wilson most conspicuously in March 1976 when he deployed his Parliamentary authority to suggest that the Scott affair was part of a South African intelligence operation)? Sensing that a Thatcherite government may give them the most sympathetic hearing they can expect, the spooks may well try to use the Thorpe affair as evidence that they ought to be given more powers, and a wider remit. The real lesson is that it demonstrates the uselessness of official snooping.

THAT, IN THE BEGINNING, was all it was. When Thorpe became an MP in 1959, MI5 opened a file on him. A year later, the first suspicion that he might have homosexual tendencies was noted down.

The background was the forthcoming wedding of Princess Margaret and Antony Armstrong-Jones. Thorpe and Armstrong-Jones had been classmates at Eton. After Jeremy Fry withdrew from the position of best man, it was rumoured that Thorpe might be invited to stand in. The security service decided to check him out.

They rang Lt.-Col. R. R. N. (now Sir Ranulph 'Streaky') Bacon, then Chief Constable of Devon. Bacon discreetly inquired with the constable in the village Thorpe used as his political base, and talked to some of Thorpe's associates. The MP was not interviewed, but he was kept under surveillance for a time. Bacon reported back the suspicion – which he found was 'fairly common knowledge in Devon' – that Thorpe was probably a homosexual.

It is useful to state what the official rules were, and are. 'Character defect' was originally a code-word for communist or left-wing sympathies: in 1956 the Conference of Privy Councillors expanded the definition to include homosexuality as a category likely to create a 'security risk'. In 1963 the Vassall Tribunal ruled that passive or active homosexuality was enough to make a bar against promotion for civil servants. Lord Denning, reporting on the Profumo affair, laid down the rules for politicians:

> In my opinion immorality or discreditable conduct is only a security risk if it is committed in such circumstances that it might expose the person concerned to blackmail or to undue pressures . . . I would not ordinarily regard adultery as a security risk, at any rate when committed clandestinely with a person who was not likely to resort to blackmail.

Denning, writing at a time when homosexual behaviour was still illegal, considered homosexuality to be a security risk in itself. But extension of the Denning principle into our present and rather more liberal legal climate would still leave Jeremy Thorpe as a security risk. His position might be compared to that of a heterosexual adulterer who is determined to suppress the allegations of a disgruntled ex-lover who claims to have been ill-treated.

Of course, when Norman Scott made his first allegation against Thorpe in 1962, homosexual behaviour was still a criminal offence. And Scott had his letters which – although not corroboration of a particular affair – were sufficiently compromising to be used as pressure. (Indeed, as late as 1974 they were still worth £2,500 to David Holmes.) And if the revelations of Thorpe's trial proved anything it was that he feared exposure desperately: a fear that opened-up the possibility of a lifetime's blackmail.

Scott's allegation was made at Chelsea police station: whether the security services got to know of it at the time – adding it to the fruits of their discreet royal wedding inquiries – is impossible to say. But by the early 1970s, there had been at least four separate occasions on which official attention was drawn, not only to general rumours, but to the fact that highly embarrassing documents existed.

IN JULY 1971, Scott was interviewed by the South African journalist Gordon Winter, who took copies of the now-famous 'Bunnies' and 'Mrs Tish' letters. Having tried unsuccessfully to sell his material to the *Sunday People*, Winter passed it to MI5 and then for good measure to the South African Bureau of State Security (BOSS).

Almost three years later, in January 1974, Thorpe's Tory opponent in North Devon, Tim Keigwin, took action of his own. He had been alarmed as long ago as 1965 by an informal suggestion, coming from a senior policeman, to the effect that there was a compromising file on Thorpe in Barnstaple police station. Now he was approached by Norman Scott in person, and he passed on the details of the allegations to Lord Carrington and Edward Heath.

Later the same year, there was another tip. A consultant psychiatrist at Exe Vale Hospital, Exeter, Dr Douglas Flack, was asked to give an opinion on Scott's mental state. Scott

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asked Flack to take charge of a pile of documents, including the Thorpe letters. Flack says that he took Scott's tale seriously, but was concerned about the security aspect if it was indeed true – and also about his own possible vulnerability to Scott as a malicious complainant. Cautiously, he took the advice of the Medical Defence Union. They told Flack he was safe to proceed with treatment, and that his information would be passed to the appropriate authorities. Flack is confident that it was done.

Then, towards the end of 1974, an unknown informant told the Devon and Cornwall Police about Scott's story, adding two important points: Scott had *written evidence* to support his claims, and *bank statements* to show he had been paid hush-money. The police informed Whitehall and were asked to investigate the matter – not as a crime (which homosexuality was no longer, anyway) but as a security matter.

Copies of Scott's letters and bank statements were clandestinely obtained (a fairly remarkable thing in itself). A verbal report was made to MI5 confirming the existence of what a senior West Country detective considered to be 'positive corroboration' of the existence of the letters, together with a record of their purchase by David Holmes in February.

This exercise of security-service power – worth, in itself, a public inquriy of some kind – led to no discernibly useful result. Certainly it did not prevent Harold Wilson, as nominal chieftain of the security services, parading in the House of Commons an almost wholly absurd version of the background to the Thorpe affair. (Of course, a relationship between Wilson and the executives of the secret world would, inevitably, be a dialogue between merchants of fantasy on both sides. How much did they tell him? How much was the product of his own imagining?)

NORMAN SCOTT is not a very attractive person, but he is also a weak and practically defenceless individual. Between them, Wilson and Thorpe were effectively turning the power and authority of the state against him: not a pretty business. The relationship between Thorpe and Scott appears to have been pretty accurately set out in a Metropolitan Police note made early in 1962, when a detective, Raymond Whitmore-Smith, interviewed Scott about an allegation that he had stolen a woman's coat. The interview was arranged by Jeremy Thorpe, and took place in Thorpe's room at St. Stephen's House, Westminster. Smith recorded later:

> During the interview with Josiffe (Scott) in the presence of Mr. Jeremy Thorpe, it was patently obvious that Josiffe was a rather weak personality, apparently labouring under a considerable mental strain, and completely domineered by Mr. Thorpe, who was acting in an advisory capacity to Josiffe.
>
> During the period when Josiffe was writing a statement, Mr. Thorpe left the office to attend a Division in the House of Commons, and during his absence Josiffe was noticeably relaxed and more talkative.

(It was a few months after this interview – which did not lead to any charge – that Scott went to Chelsea police station and accused Thorpe of having engaged in homosexual practices with him.)

BRITAIN MAY BE moving towards a position in which a humane and frankly – acknowledged homosexuality need not be a disqualification for high office. But Jeremy Thorpe's disqualifications – revealed, if nowhere else, in his attitude to campaign finances – will presumably continue to be terminal. And the point is that the security services, though they may be helpful in steering the Royal Family away from a possible embarrassment, are of no serious value in protecting our politics against such 'character defects'.

Nor is it possible to imagine any strengthening of their powers, or any rationalisation of their relationships with our various police forces which would make them any more effective – short of an outright transition of Britain into a police state. And, as Muldergate and other examples show, police states are in themselves prone to fearsome corruption.

Probably, there is no complete protection against the flawed, and potentially unstable politician. But the only useful protection lies in greater open-ness throughout society as a whole: it is hard to believe that Jeremy Thorpe's sad career would have been possible except in a country with a half-free press and a tradition of shrouding all discussions of 'national security' in swaddlings of highly-ominous secrecy.

Of course, one of the many things that we do not know about the security services is what they cost. We can be sure, however, that the sum is something less than trivial. Clearly, Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe are having a little trouble finding all the spending cuts they want. In the aftermath of the Thorpe trial, they might consider taking the axe to the denizens of the secret world.

NEXT WEEK: David Leigh and Peter Chippindale set the Thorpe affair into its full political and financial context.

Mental Health

Our shabby treatment of the mentally ill

Robert Kilroy-Silk writes: Way back in 1974 the interim report of the Butler Committee on Mentally Abnormal Offenders recommended 'as a matter or urgency' the establishment of a series or regional secure psychiatric units. The units, as the report pointed out, were required for those mentally disordered persons, offenders and non-offenders alike, who do not require the degree of security offered by the special hospitals but who, nonetheless, are not suitable for treatment under the open conditions of the local psychiatric hospitals. The then Secretary of State, Barbara Castle, said that she accepted that urgent action should be taken to establish the units and she requested Regional Health Authorities to make suitable arrangements.

A year later the final report of the Butler Committee expressed disappointment that such little progress had been made. 'What causes us concern,' it said, 'is that in some parts of the country there have been indications of unwillingness either to formulate plans at all, or to give our proposals the priority which we thought and the Government agreed to be necessary.'

Today, five years later, we still do not have a single regional secure unit in operation. Moreover, the East Anglian, South West Thames and North West Thames Regional Health Authorities have not yet even submitted plans for regional units to the DHSS. Yet each of them, along with all the other RHAs have, since 1976, been in receipt of yearly government grants allocated specifically for the establishment of the units.

So far the government has allocated the fourteen RHAs a total of £24m. Oxford, North East Thames and the South Western RHAs have not yet spent a penny of their special allocation on regional secure units. The £1,168,000 given to Oxford, for example, has been lost in its general revenue. Some of the other laggardly RHAs have at least used some of the money to make a start on RSUs, but even here the amounts used are minimal. Thus the Trent RHA has spent a derisory £6,300 of its total of £2,420,000 received since 1976; the Northern RHA only £69,421 out of its total £1,646,000. Yet the government continues to dole out the money year after year.

Meanwhile patients in the special hospitals and in prison wait. On 30 April 1979 there were 149 men and 48 women in the special hospitals who were thought by the responsible medical officers to be suitable for transfer to a less secure hospital, such as the regional units. One man aged 66 has been waiting for an incredible eight years and four months, and a woman of 65 for four years and three months. A further 13 men and seven women have been waiting for over four years; 17 men and six women for three to four years; 38 men and 11 women for one to two years: and 61 men and 19 women for up to a year. And they will continue to wait. The first regional secure units will not be completed until 1980-81 and the Minister of Health can only say that he 'hopes' that units in the other regions will be established in the early 1980s.

And it is not just the patient in the special hospital who experiences a frustrating wait for appropriate medical treatment. On 31 December 1978 there were 519 persons held in prisons who were considered by prison medical staff to be suffering from mental disorder of a nature or degree warranting their detention in hospital. Yet a Home Office Minister had to confess that 'in a number of cases the prison authorities have not judged it worthwhile to recommend a prisoner's transfer to hospital because they have foreseen difficulties in finding a hospital vacancy.' Faced with the obstruction of doctors, nurses and the health service unions, the prison authorities have given up trying to find proper accommodation and treatment for mentally disordered prisoners.

'It is no part of a civilized policy to put the mentally ill in prison,' the Home Office Minister of State, Brynmor John, said in 1977, 'and make prisons the receptacles for those whom no other agency in society will accept.' Quite so. And yet we do it. And we do it because as a society we do not care enough. It is totally indefensible for patients to be detained in special hospitals and persons held in prison when everyone accepts that they would be better off elsewhere and when the facilities are available in NHS hospitals and when funds have been provided to establish other units.

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Will SALT explode on Carter?

If the US Senate rejects SALT II, argues GODFREY HODGSON, it will be a black day for humanity. What is more likely, and equally dangerous, is that they will alter it so much that the USSR will insist on renegotiating it.

EARLY NEXT month the foreign relations committee of the US Senate will begin public hearings to determine whether the Senate should give its consent to the ratification of the strategic arms limitation treaty which Presidents Carter and Brezhnev signed in Vienna on 18 June. Two other committees, on the armed services and on intelligence, will also examine witnesses on the treaty, but in secret. Already President Carter has appeared before a joint session of the Congress to plead for the treaty. The Great Debate has begun.

Most speculation has focused on the question whether or not the treaty will secure the two-thirds majority required by the Constitution for its ratification. But the truly significant event is not the treaty's ratification: it is the debate itself.

Already many senators have denounced the treaty in strong terms. The influential 'Scoop' Jackson has repeatedly compared it to the appeasement of Hitler in the 1930s. Senator Howard Baker, the Republican leader in the Senate and at present the leading contender for the Republican nomination, says he will not sign the treaty unamended. Even the Democratic leader in the Senate, Robert Byrd, is against the treaty as it stands.

This unprecedented onslaught on the President's attempt to negotiate a safer relationship with the Soviet Union has immense implications: for President Carter's political future, for US/Soviet relations, and for the relationship between the United States and Western Europe. There is even a sense in which it gives the Soviet leadership a veto on President Carter's hopes of re-election. In any event, it marks the beginning of a new and *more dangerous* period in international affairs – however far this may be from the intentions of those who are leading the onslaught.

ON 19 NOVEMBER 1919 the Senate withheld its consent, by a vote of 59 to 53, from the peace treaty which President Woodrow Wilson signed at Versailles, and also – since the President stubbornly refused to separate the two issues – from the charter of the League of Nations. In one sense, the defeat of Wilson's treaty was a fluke. If Wilson, in poor health, had not refused all compromise, the treaty would have been ratified easily.

As it was, the event was catastrophic: for the President, for the Senate, and for the world. It established, firmly if unjustly, a doubt in the minds of the next two generations of Americans about the trustworthiness of Congress where foreign policy was concerned: a doubt that led to the excesses of the 'imperial presidency' in Vietnam and elsewhere. In the world at large, it cast doubt on the reliability of agreements negotiated with American Presidents. And finally, because it deprived the League of American membership, the vote may well have been an important contributory cause of the Second World War.

Sixty years later, there is a serious possibility that the Senate will refuse to ratify the

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Vienna treaty. That too would be a catastrophe. Not because it is such a wonderful treaty. It marks no great step forward in the direction of nuclear disarmament; nor does it inaugurate a new era of mutual trust between the US and the USSR.

Quite the contrary: the treaty was negotiated from start to finish in the profoundest mistrust, and the ratification debate is likely to make US/Soviet relations as touchy as they have ever been. The main argument of the non-ratifiers, and it will be shouted from the housetops, is that the Soviet Union cannot be trusted because it is bent on world domination.

IN TERMS of disarmament, the treaty will achieve next to nothing. The Soviet Union, as a result of it, will have to scrap a few dozen near-obsolete heavy missiles; the United States will junk an even smaller number of already mothballed strategic bombers.

Its purpose, admittedly, is arms limitation, not disarmament. But even in those terms, it represents a very limited gain. So much so that several liberal senators, such as George McGovern, Mark Hatfield and William Proxmire, are even threatening to vote against it because it is too weak.

It is indeed a very small step. And the concerns of those who opposed it, from the Right as well as from the Left, are not completely unfounded. But at least it is a small step in the right direction. If the Senate should flatly refuse to ratify it, there can be no serious hope of any further progress on strategic arms limitation, either between the two superpowers, or in terms of non-proliferation by such governments as Pakistan, Israel, South Africa, Argentina and the rest. Nor is there much hope of progress in reducing conventional force levels in central Europe. If the treaty is rejected, poor thing though it may be, it will be a black day for humanity, and that is not empty rhetoric.

What is far more likely, however, is that the Senate *will* ratify the treaty. Or rather, that it will ratify *a* treaty of some kind. For the present prognosis is that the majority in the Senate is now in such a mood of suspicion, both of the Soviet Union's aggressive intentions, and of the Carter Administration's weakness, that it will not ratify the text that was signed in Vienna until it has festooned it with resolutions, clarifications, riders, interpretations and amendments. And what is more it will not complete that process until the 1980 presidential election campaign is perilously close.

OBVIOUSLY the consequences of such a scenario cannot be precisely calculated. But it is hard to see how the following developments will not be among them.

1. The United States will increase its expenditure on strategic arms systems. This, it is worth repeating, will be, is already, the first consequence of the attempt to persuade the US Senate to accept a treaty limiting strategic arms. The President has already announced the go-ahead for the MX, a new system whereby large, multiple-warheaded missiles will be shuffled between several thousand holes in the Western sagebrush like the cards in some Strangelovian variant of find-the-lady. Senator Robert Byrd, the Democratic majority leader in the Senate, has already given it as his opinion that without this decision the President would have had no hope whatever of procuring ratification of the treaty. It is possible that the Joint Chiefs of Staff will successfully demand other new weapons.

2. In spite of such concessions, President Carter's position in domestic politics will be severely damaged. His standing in the polls is already low, and it is likely to fall. This will increase the temptation to Governor Jerry Brown of California and perhaps, if Brown makes serious inroads in Carter's support, Senator Edward Kennedy and even other Democratic candidates to declare themselves.

Carter will be crippled in his other dealings with Congress. Specifically, he will therefore be unlikely to persevere with any serious attempt to cut back US energy consumption, now as a matter of statistical fact the principal cause of world energy shortages. As another consequence, he is unlikely to be able to fight effectively, even if he decides to fight at all, for the 'Anglo-American' plan in Rhodesia, or for maintaining UN sanctions there. The same senators who are leading the drive to lift sanctions are also leaders of the fight against the SALT treaty.

3. The general credibility of the US gov-

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A television producer has for some years been trying to persuade a talented woman author to write a play. She keeps refusing. Eventually she comes to him with an idea: a respected and distinguished man has a young girl up to his flat and rapes her. His standing in the community is such that nobody believes her. For the author's idea to come across not only must the viewers be fully aware that a rape occurred, but they must feel just how humiliating, horrifying and disgusting the rape is. She tells the producer that the rape scene must be clearly and extensively shown.

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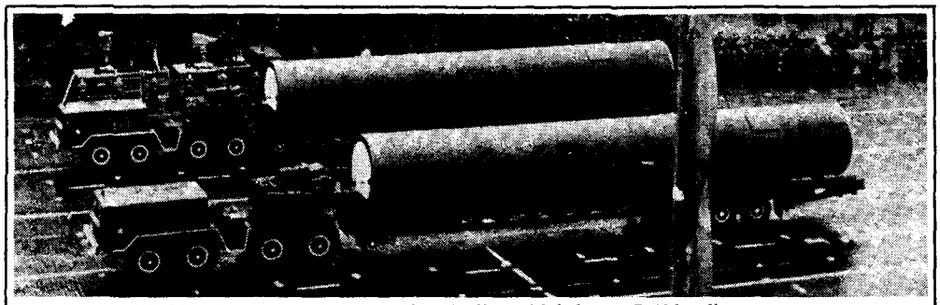

Novosti

The Russian SS-11 intercontinental ballistic missile, which has a 5,500 mile range.

ernment in international relations must be hurt. US press comment has attempted to argue that it is evidence of American democracy that successive Presidents can spend seven years negotiating a solemn treaty, only to have to acknowledge that they may be unable to deliver on it. But the truth is that the United States is virtually the only power in the world, democratic or otherwise, that is capable of holding its internal debate about a commitment of such importance *after* making it. True, the Senate has only refused to ratify eleven out of the 1,100 treaties sent to it for ratification. But the Soviet Union, and others, can be relied on to make the most of this particular case if the Senate does reject the Carter-Brezhnev treaty.

4. US leadership in Western Europe is bound to be seriously affected. In the past 30 years, in most Western European countries, Left and Right have been content, in the main, to accept US leadership, partly because they had no intention of paying the cost of providing their own defence (nor did the United States show any great enthusiasm for a Europe that had no need of the American umbrella); and partly because each faction in every European country trusted 'the Americans' more than it trusted the opposition in its own country. But it was a necessary condition of such a stable system that Washington should continue to have an essentially consensual, bipartisan policy, at least on the mainstream issues of superpower and East-West relations. With the President in the process of being publicly torn to shreds both by his opponents and by his own party in Washington, this condition will no longer be so apparent.

5. The discrediting of American leadership will bear especially hard on those, like the most important single political leader in Europe today, Helmut Schmidt, who have been most clearly identified (at some cost to themselves) as the strongest defenders of American leadership. Schmidt can now be expected publicly to dissociate himself from Carter. (Privately, he has already been doing so for some time.) In the more or less long run, the unedifying spectacle of anti-Soviet demagoguery that we can look forward to from Washington over the next six months must strengthen Schmidt's opponents on both flanks. (Not that all opposition to the treaty is necessarily demagogic, but plenty of it will be.) On the Left, it will help those, like Herbert Wehner, who have been arguing that Germans must look to their security in the future by neutralising both the Germanies; and those, like Franz-Josef Strauss on the Right, who will argue that, if the *Amis* can no longer be relied on to defend Europe, then Germany must do the job for herself.

5. More generally, the credibility of the US strategic commitment and of the strategic 'umbrella' must be called into question more seriously than ever before. This will revive discussion in Europe of more powerful 'theatre' nuclear weapons. No doubt there is much to be said for persuading Europeans to think responsibly and clearly about their own defence, including what defence they feel they need against the massive Soviet weaponry now targeted on Western Europe.

But it is a pregnant understatement to say that it will be the end of an era when Western Europeans do start to face up to the implications of those questions.

6. The most bizarre consequence of all will be that in a sense the Soviet Union will acquire a veto over who is to be the next president of the United States. It will not be the foreign relations committee of the Senate, nor the editorial board of the *New York Times*, that will decide at what point the Senate's alterations to the treaty constitute a changed text that needs to be renegotiated with the Soviet Union. That will be for the party of the second part – the Soviet leadership, perhaps bereft of Leonid Brezhnev – to decide.

The Soviet leadership presumably wants a treaty, if only because any treaty on approximately the lines of the one signed in Vienna does give some recognition to the rough equivalence of American and Soviet strategic power. (The Senate opponents of ratification are right about that, even if they are wrong to see that recognition of rough equivalence, at a level of armaments sufficient to devastate the northern hemisphere many times over, as a threat to American freedom.)

But the Politburo presumably does not want a treaty so badly that it could be counted on to pass up a heaven-sent opportunity to exact a higher price from a US administration that had already failed, or seemed about to fail, to secure ratification of the negotiated text.

THAT IS where the Soviet influence over the fate of Jimmy Carter comes in. Carter is over a barrel: a bad position in which to be caught by gentlemen with the Soviet leadership's proven record of unsentimentality. He must pass the treaty. He has pinned all his credibility to his ability to do that. Yet it begins to look as though the only treaty he can get ratified is one that the Soviet leadership has the option of rejecting. So, though Jimmy Carter is the rightful leader of the majority party in the United States, the Soviet leadership has it virtually in its power to deny Carter the nomination, or at least, if he is nominated, the election.

Carter thinks, as he put it in a phrase that sounded strange on the lips of a born-again Baptist, that he can 'whup Teddy Kennedy's ass.' But the sorry spectacle Carter is likely to present by the time the reporters drift back to New Hampshire for the opening scene of the four-yearly political soap opera is one that would tempt even less ambitious politicians than Jerry Brown and Ted Kennedy to try their hand at ass-whupping. And in the meantime Republican candidates like Howard Baker and John Connally will not be silent on the issues of SALT, Soviet ambitions and American security.

THIS SCENARIO is so depressing that there is an understandable temptation to argue that Congress has no business meddling in foreign affairs. This view is specially common among those, for example in the foreign ministries of Western Europe, who fundamentally feel more comfortable dealing secretly with the executive branch of the US government, full of good chaps like Henry Kissinger, McGeorge Bundy and Zbig Brzezinski. There is no damned nonsense about democracy in the way *they* got where they are.

But satisfying though it may be to wish that uncouth elected fellows from beyond the Potomac and Hudson rivers were not allowed to bring their muddy boots on to the silk Bokharas of diplomacy, it can only be a pipe dream. For one thing, as a matter of constitutional law, there is not the slightest doubt that Congress does have a role in foreign policy, and even those constitutional authorities, like Justice George Sutherland, who have argued that the President has vast inherent powers in foreign policy, have never suggested that the Senate is not solemnly obliged under the Constitution to ratify treaties.

Secondly, to the extent that Congress has reasserted its constitutional powers in foreign policy over the past fifteen years, it is as a direct result of the abuse and excess of the presidential exercise of foreign policy, symbolised by the Tonkin Gulf resolution, which gave Lyndon Johnson constitutional authority to wage war in South-East Asia, and which is now known to have been the pre-scripted exploitation of a minor incident whose real nature was deliberately distorted so as to deceive Congress.

The case for congressional intervention in the formation, if not in the execution, of foreign policy, was effectively made by James Bryce many years ago. Concede, said Bryce, that legislatures are unfitted in many ways for the conduct of foreign policy: they are too big, too rowdy, too public, too prone to be swayed by domestic politics. What then of those countries where policy had been entrusted to a professional elite, Bryce asked: what of Germany, of Russia, of Austro-Hungary? Bryce was writing in 1918. The question answered itself. 'Whatever faults modern democracies may have committted' in foreign affairs, Bryce concluded, 'the faults chargeable on monarchs and oligarchies have been less pardonable and more harmful to the peace and progress of mankind.'

Not the least of the faults chargeable on the oligarchs who have conducted US foreign policy for the past 30 years is that they have failed to educate and recruit a mass democratic support for their policies. That is the fundamental cause of the sorry mess we shall have to watch, as potential victims but disenfranchised spectators, over the next six months.

Godfrey Hodgson's new Chatham House paper, Congress and American Foreign Policy, *can be obtained from RIIA, 10 St James's Sq., London SW1, price £5.*

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The end of Cambodia

In this final extract from *Sideshow*,* William Shawcross explains how Kissinger, deaf to the voices of reason, enabled the Khmer Rouge to win control of the Cambodian people.

Seven days after Congress ended the bombing of Cambodia in August 1973, Richard Nixon nominated Henry Kissinger as his Secretary of State. His confirmation was a foregone conclusion; it was greeted with widespread and uncritical acclaim by politicians and journalists alike.

As Secretary, Kissinger might have been expected to devote a little more attention to Cambodia. He did not do so.

FOR FOURTEEN months after the bombing ended in August 1973, Kissinger made no effort to end the war in Cambodia. A State Department summary of negotiating efforts, produced in March 1975 in an effort to persuade Congress to increase military aid, stated that:

> a number of major efforts toward negotiation were made in 1973, efforts which were thwarted by the forced bombing halt in August of that year. In October, 1974, we broached the idea of an international conference on Cambodia. . . . We received no substantive answer to these overtures. . . .

The period of the war which followed is, in some senses, the most depressing of all. The military and social decay of the country continued, without optimism in Phnom Penh and without concern in Washington.

The fundamental military problems of incompetence and corruption were growing more and more serious. Thousands upon thousands of real soldiers were unpaid; thousands more were mere phantoms on rolls so that officers could pocket their pay. There was no proper command structure; the US Embassy, on Kissinger's direct orders, tolerated Lon Nol's insistence on running almost all battles from his palace, even though he was known to be totally ineffective. The End of Tour reports of the US Generals in charge of delivering supplies to the Cambodians (obtained under the Freedom of Information Act) make depressing reading.

There were by now few volunteers to the falling flag. The government had passed a Conscription Act. Cinema queues were a favourite hunting ground; army trucks would rush up in the evening and drag young customers away at gunpoint. Army life began as it ended – in squalor. The boys were packed off for inadequate training. General Cleland's account of the system and how the problems were met is of some interest. 'The new troops faced primitive living conditions, lackadaiscal cadre at some training centres, and lack of command interest.' As more and more recruits deserted, the government, he says, 'finally realised . . . that something had to be done.' What was it?

> Money previously allocated for training centres was increased, barrier material was provided (not to keep the enemy out but to assist in keeping the recruits in). . . .

By now the economy was in ruins. Inflation ran at about 250 per cent a year, industrial and agricultural production was permanently declining, exports were non-existent.

The government and the population it controlled were now on American welfare – about 95 per cent of all income came from the United States. One American economist stationed in the Phnom Penh embassy later complained that the American economic policies were like 'picking fleas off a dog that has cancer'. . . .

Those who could count themselves a part of the government's establishment continued to live well. Lon Non, Lon Nol's younger brother, was reported to have raised $90 million by arms trafficking and extortion.

But for ordinary people the more urgent problem now was always food. Eighty per cent of the country's pre-war paddy fields had been abandoned, and the government's own figures showed that in 1974 rice production was only 655,000 metric tons – as opposed to 3.8 million tons in the last year before the war. The shortfall was not nearly met by imports. Through the last eighteen months of the war most people in the cities were slowly starving.

By early 1974 the United States government had provided humanitarian aid of $2.5 million for Cambodia. It can be compared with $516.5 million in military aid and $216.6 million in economic aid that had flowed from Washington since the war began.

Until August 1973 the refugees tended to cite American bombing as the main reason for flight. Through 1974 they spoke of the increasing violence of the Khmer Rouge.

'Out there' the Khmer Rouge were reorganising. At the end of 1973 the Party finally asserted full control of the Front's military command structure. Political commissars were now assigned to assist and instruct officers down to company level throughout most of the country.

At the same time they were developing into an increasingly formidable political organisation. As their relationship with Hanoi became more and more bitter and as their growing strength allowed them more and more independence, they started to eradicate among the people they controlled the three traditional elements of Cambodian life: respect for the monarchy, attachment to the village, and devotion to Buddha. In Peking the Prince understood the drift of events. In a memorable phrase he told the Italian journalist Oriana Fallacci that he and the Khmer Rouge hated one another and that they would 'spit me out like a cherry stone' when they had sucked him dry.

All Khmer Rouge policies, and in particular the relocation of villages, were obviously intended to effect a total and dramatic break with the past.

With the Stars and Stripes bundled under his arm John Gunther Dean, the US Ambassador, leaves Phnom Penh just before the Communist takeover. He had urged a 'controlled solution' but Kissinger told him to 'fight to the last Cambodian'.

Sideshow: Nixon, Kissinger and the Destruction of Cambodia will be published in Britain next month by André Deutsch. William Shawcross reported from Indo-China and Washington, during the Nixon years, for the *Sunday Times* and the NEW STATESMAN. He has written biographies of Alexander Dubcek and Janos Kadar.

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It was now that the gruesome accounts of rule by terror, which after 1975 became commonplace, began to filter out of the 'liberated' zones. Refugees repeated that those who questioned the orders of the young cadres were led away never to reappear. According to a State Department study, 'Some refugees said that the climate of fear was so great that even within the confines of their own home a husband and wife did not dare discuss Khmer Rouge policies for fear of being overheard.' This information – and much more – was available to the State Department and the National Securty Council. It does not appear to have created any sense of urgency.

The last American Ambassador to Phnom Penh, John Gunther Dean, arrived a year before the end in April 1974. The record shows that he was alarmed by the disintegration of the Lon Nol side, the misery of the refugees and the increasing harshness of the Khmer Rouge. Dean understood that any improvements he could effect in the government's position could only be marginal. The republic was fighting for survival alone, and nothing would change that. He sent a series of cables back to the State Department warning that 'time is against us', arguing that 'the ship must be found a port; we cannot abandon it on the high seas'. He began to talk of the need for a 'controlled solution', which he later defined as 'a non-military solution which would take account of the realities' while allowing the Cambodians to stop fighting and the Americans to withdraw with dignity.

After Nixon resigned rather than face certain impeachment by the Senate in August 1974, Dean visited Washington to try to argue personally with Kissinger for a 'controlled solution' which would deny absolute victory to the Khmer Rouge – a victory which would, he believed, lead to a terrible bloodbath in Cambodia. Once again he was disappointed by Kissinger's lack of interest; the Secretary barely had time for him. One Congressman to whom Dean did manage to talk later attacked Kissinger for his unconcern, saying, 'the impression one gets is that we are prepared to continue financing this war to the last Cambodian'.

THE MOST substantial attempt to find a negotiated end to the war and to enable Sihanouk rather than the Khmer Rouge to take over the ruins of Cambodia was made not by the Americans but by the French, in particular by the French Ambassador to Peking, Etienne Manac'h.

Manac'h had, like Chou En-Lai, long been an admirer of Prince Sihanouk and thought he was the best possible hope for Cambodia. He knew, however, that in the face of Kissinger's continued refusal to meet with the Prince or to take him seriously, Chinese policy was shifting through 1974 to fuller support for the Khmer Rouge, Sihanouk's uneasy allies. Nevertheless, he thought one last attempt was essential.

With Sihanouk's approval – so long as the thing was done in absolute secret – Manac'h proposed that President Giscard d'Estaing suggest to Nixon's successor Gerald Ford, at their proposed summit in December 1974, a solution. The Americans should ask Lon Nol to leave Cambodia, Sihanouk should fly back, rally the population and members of the political oppositon to Lon Nol, declare a ceasefire and await the arrival of the Khmer Rouge. The communists would of course be furious at being finessed in such a way but Manac'h argued they would have to accept the fait accompli.

After discussing the idea with Chinese leaders, Manac'h personally briefed Giscard before the French leader flew to meet Ford on the island of Martinique. Like Sihanouk, Manac'h insisted that the plan's chances depended on its being kept totally secret, that both Sihanouk and the Chinese would have to denounce it should it become public.

During the discussions at Martinique Kissinger apparently voiced some interest in the proposal. But it was ruined by the official communiqué. This should have made no mention of Cambodia at all. In fact it stated, 'Regarding Cambodia (the two presidents) expressed the hope that the contending parties would enter into negotiations in the near future rather than continuing the military struggle.' This idea, that Lon Nol and Sihanouk should negotiate with the Khmer Rouge, was always absurd and it had never been French policy. It was, however, American policy and it was Kissinger's staff who drafted the communiqué.

A few days later Giscard apologised on French television for the words on Cambodia; they did not represent his government's views, he said. In Peking Sihanouk issued a public denunciation of this 'inadmissible interference' in Cambodia's affairs and told Manac'h he could no longer support any such attempts.

A few days later, on 1 January 1975 the Khmer Rouge launched their final offensive against Phnom Penh. Now only force would prevail, Sihanouk told Manac'h. Stalinist Albania, he said, would be the model.

Kissinger's principal response to the offensive was to ask for huge new supplies of military and economic aid from Congress. He said that unless Congress provided the aid that the administration demanded, there would be 'the most serious consequences' for American credibility. The validity of American commitments around the world would be called into question. 'I don't believe we can escape the problem by condemning those who have dealt with us to a certain destruction,' Kissinger said.

The administration now maintained that it sought merely to give Phnom Penh enough ammunition to survive until the May rains checked the Khmer Rouge offensive. Then perhaps the communists would finally negotiate.

What Kissinger was, in fact, trying to do was to pin the blame for the failure of the 'Nixon Doctrine in its purest form' on that branch of government that had always been most sceptical of the venture. When Cambodia fell, as the administration knew it would, the 'catastrophe' could be laid entirely on Congress, and in the resultant furore, the legislature might then accede to the executive's demands over Vietnam. Even at this late stage, there were performances to be given in the sideshow. One problem, however, was that by insisting on linking American 'credibility' to a cause that was already lost, Kissinger actually helped to manufacture the very crisis of confidence that he ostensibly sought to avoid.

With some difficulty the administration persuaded a group of members of Congress to visit Saigon and Phnom Penh. In Phnom Penh they were greeted by hostile newspaper editorials. Many of the legislators were genuinely unable to decide how best American moral responsibilities for the human disaster that Cambodia now constituted should be

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exercised. The dilemma was best summed up by Representative Pete McCloskey, a liberal Republican from California, who summarised his feelings with some bitterness:

> I can only tell you my emotional reaction, getting into that country . . . If I could have found the military or State Department leader who has been the architect of this policy, my instinct would be to string him up. Why they are there and what they have done to the country is greater evil than we have done to any country in the world, and wholly without reason, except for our own benefit to fight against the Vietnamese.

BY THE beginning of February 1975 it was clear that because of Congress's final refusal to go along with Kissinger's policies, the Lon Nol troops would soon run out of ammunition. It was now evident to the Khmer Rouge leadership that total military victory was within the grasp of some 70,000 troops. If Lon Nol's troops continued to fall away as they were now doing, Phnom Penh would be in their hands within weeks. According to Sihanouk's *chef du cabinet*, they had not expected this. At the end of February, delegates were summoned to the Second National Congress of the Front, under the auspices of the Communist Party of Kampuchea. They considered the implications of imminent success and, in particular, the problems of feeding and governing the three and a half million people crowded into the enclaves on the losing side. In total secrecy, they decided that as soon as victory was theirs, the cities would immediately be emptied of their populations.

As the inevitable end approached the strain of implementing Kissinger's policies became even more and more intense for Embassy officials. In recent weeks the head of the AID programme had died at his post, Dean's deputy had had to be given emergency treatment for bleeding ulcers, and another official had a heart attack; one military attaché was drinking heavily. Dean himself was suffering from high blood pressure and the effects of extreme fatigue.

> 'I have only committed this mistake of believing in you, the Americans.'

In those days Dean was not always very diplomatic, and sometimes he made his contempt for Kissinger and his policies obvious. On 6 April, he gave a dinner for the American journalists who were still in Phnom Penh. When one reporter asked him what he expected to do after Cambodia, Dean looked at him and said slowly, 'We would hope our efforts to negotiate a sensible solution would be rewarded with a suitable European embassy.' In reply to a question of whether things might have been better had Kissinger accepted his advice about a 'controlled solution' Dean replied, 'You said it, I didn't.'

At the other end of the table, his deputy Robert Keeley was openly even more morose and explicit. Keeley, never a man to accept policies and orders without question, had jeopardised his career while in Greece by criticising the Nixon administration's close support for the Colonels. He had become even angrier in Cambodia. 'One day', he said slowly, 'Henry Kissinger will write his memoirs. And we will all go out and buy them. And there will be a chapter on Cambodia. And I will write a footnote on every page.'

On 12 April, the American Embassy fled. Dean invited members of the Cambodian cabinet to flee too. To his surprise few accepted. Indeed one of the men who had originally overthrown Sihanouk in 1970, and who faced certain death at Khmer Rouge hands, replied:

> Dear Excellency and friend. I thank you very sincerely for your letter and for your offer to transport me towards freedom. I cannot, alas, leave in such a cowardly fashion.
>
> As for you and in particular for your great country, I never believed for a moment that you would have this sentiment of abandoning a people which has chosen liberty. You have refused us your protection and we can do nothing about it. You leave and it is my wish that you and your country will find happiness under the sky.
>
> But mark it well that, if I shall die here on the spot and in my country that I love, it is too bad because we all are born and must die one day. I have only committed this mistake of believing in you, the Americans.
>
> Please accept, Excellency, my dear friend, my faithful and friendly sentiments. Sink Matak.

The blow that was dealt to morale by the flight of the Americans can be imagined. Nonetheless, with remarkable courage, the army continued to fight, and the Prime Minister tried to devise an orderly surrender. He received no response to his overtures.

On 17 April the first of the Khmer Rouge's tiny, brutalised army reached Phnom Penh. Immediately they began to empty the hospitals and the houses of the city by force. Cambodia, they told the startled refugees, was beginning again at Year Zero.

Shawcross makes clear in his final chapter that the brutality of the Khmer Rouge since their victory in April 1975 has been astounding and inexcusable. The entire book makes clear, however, that these were men who should never have come to power and who, but for Kissinger and Nixon's policies, never would. In 1970 the Khmer Rouge had been a tiny force – some 2,000 only – with no prospect of gaining government. Cambodia, despite internal problems, was at peace, a rice exporting country where 90 per cent of the people lived on the land. By 1975 over half the population had fled to the cities where they were starving, the agricultural system had been annihilated by the war, the social infrastructure destroyed. The country had been wrecked, and it was then handed over to the only military force of any strength – the Khmer Rouge, a callow organisation which, by contrast with the Vietnamese communists, possessed almost no political organisation or tradition and had no experience of administration.

THE VIOLENCE with which the Khmer Rouge have since governed could not have been predicted, but the question which needs to be asked is how and why they came to power in such a state that only extreme violence seemed plausible to them. In this light it is worth noting the termination report drawn up by the US AID team in Phnom Penh after they fled in 1975. It reflects to some extent the anguish of junior officials forced to implement policies they felt were destructive.

The report noted that 'Cambodia slipped in less than five years from a significant exporter of rice to large-scale imports, and when these ended in April 1975, to the brink of starvation'. Given how the Khmer Rouge actually behaved, US AID's conclusion was significant:

> If ever a country needed to beat its swords into ploughshares in a race to save itself from hunger, it is Cambodia. The prospects that it can or will do so are poor . . . Therefore, without large-scale external food and equipment assistance there will be widespread starvation between now and next February . . . Slave labour and starvation rations for half the nation's people (probably heaviest among those who supported the republic) will be a cruel necessity for this year, and general deprivation and suffering will stretch over the next two or three years before Cambodia can get back to rice self-sufficiency.

That is very nearly how refugees described what happened in Cambodia after April 1975.

All wars are designed to arouse anger, and almost all soldiers are taught to hate and to dehumanise their enemy. Veterans of the combat zone are often possessed of a mad rage to destroy, and to avenge their fallen comrades. It does not always happen, however, that victorious armies have endured such punishment as was inflicted upon the Khmer Rouge. Nor does it always happen that such an immature and tiny force comes to power after its country's social order has been obliterated, and the nation faces the danger of takeover by a former ally, its ancient enemy. In Cambodia that did take place. In the last eight years, degree, law, moderation had been forsworn. The war and the causes for which it was fought had brought desolation while nurturing and then giving power to a little group of zealots sustained by Manichean fear.

> Cambodia, they told the refugees, was beginning again at Year Zero.

No one could have foreseen the consequences at home and abroad of Kissinger's and Nixon's decision to override the American Constitution and wage war in a neutral country. But constitutions are devised and laws are written to protect and guard against human frailty. For the highest officers in the land to abuse them is tyranny and encourages tyranny. There were achievements during the Nixon-Kissinger years. But just as their relations with each other and with their associates were often scarred by falsehoods, so were many of their relations with the rest of the world. Together they pursued ends that frequently had a tenuous link with reality, using means that were not merely disproportionate but counterproductive and untrue to those values they were meant to defend. In fact neither man demonstrated much faith in those values.

In Cambodia, the imperatives of a small and vulnerable people were consciously sacrificed to the interests of strategic design. For this reason alone the design was flawed – sacrifice the parts and what becomes of the whole? The country was used to practice ill-conceived theories and to fortify a notion of American credibility that could in fact only be harmed by such actions. Neither the United States nor its friends nor those who are caught helplessly in its embrace are well served when its leaders act, as Nixon and Kissinger acted, without care. Cambodia was not a mistake; it was a crime. The world is diminished by the experience.

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MIDDLE EAST
Ian Black

Confiscations, curfews, detentions – life goes on in the occupied areas

Punishment for the West Bank

WELL before dawn on Sunday 4 June, the eve of the twelfth anniversary of the 1967 war, several hundred Israeli troops surrounded a handsome three storey stone house in the centre of El-Bireh on the West Bank. By sunrise the spacious ground floor flat was no longer fit for human habitation. During the night the soldiers sealed up its windows with concrete blocks, welded doors into place and ripped up the floors. The movable possessions of the Al-Khayyat family were thrown into the garden.

This domestic disaster was brought upon the family by their daughter Nadia, a 21-year-old teacher in a nearby village in the Ramallah area. Late in May she was arrested by Israeli security forces on suspicion of belonging to an Al-Fatah group whose members – two more women teachers and a man who is still at large – are alleged to have planted a series of bombs in Israel, killing four civilians and wounding over 30 others. The same night two other homes where members of the cell had been living were sealed, a third was blown up. The demolitions were carried out – as is the common practice under the Israeli occupation – before the suspects had been brought to trial.

Punitive measures like this are permitted by the broad and flexible clauses of the Emergency Regulations which may be used arbitrarily throughout the occupied territories at the discretion of the local military commander. They provide for a wide range of actions, including deportations, curfews, detention without trial for prolonged periods, orders restricting movement and the indefinite confiscation of lands (useful for building settlements) and the closure of public institutions. The underlying principle of the regulations, and thus of Israel's current policy towards the Palestinians in the occupied territories, is of collective punishment. The regulations were first introduced into the country by the British Mandatory authorities in 1937. A 1945 amendment, intended largely to deal with the rising threat of the Zionist underground movements (notably Menahem Begin's Irgun) made the regulations even more draconian.

In the late 1940s even the mainstream of the Jewish *Yishuv* attacked the emergency regulations as having 'no parallel in any civilised nation' but in 1948 they were incorporated into Israeli law, used extensively against the country's Arab minority until 1966 and occasionally today against wildcat strikes and other anti-social elements. But it is the million and a half Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who bear the daily brunt of those archaic and colonial regulations. Almost all the provisions of the Emergency Regulations directly contravene the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilian persons in time of war.

The sealing of the Al-Khayyat home in El-Bireh is but one recent example of judgement and punishment for association with the suspected perpetration of a serious crime. But the principle of collective punishment is applied – albeit with less severity – on a much larger scale for much more minor offences. Last month the four thousand and three thousand residents of the refugee camps at Jalazoun and Ayda (respectively near Ramallah and Bethlehem) were kept under curfew for 12 and 10 days following a spate of stone throwing attacks on Israeli vehicles in the vicinity. A curfew on a refugee camp, where life is often intolerably squalid and crowded at the best of times, can make conditions for the residents almost unbearable. They must stay inside their homes for twenty-two out of twenty-four hours, and in the two hours that remain are permitted only to receive flour distributed by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Nothing else – including milk and fresh food – is allowed into the camp. The military government is convinced of the efficacy of such steps. Its officials regularly cite the example of the peace and quiet that has reigned in the tiny town of Halhoul, on the Jerusalem-Hebron road, since a two-week curfew (the longest yet) was imposed in March after two stone-throwing Palestinian students were shot dead.

In recent months the authorities have taken a particular dislike to schools and other educational institutions here. Pro-PLO (and of course Anti-Israel) demonstrations occur. The most famous case is that of Bir Zeit university near Ramallah, closed since 2 May.

The dialectic of occupation confounds Israel's professional Arabists and security experts. Pupils whose schools are closed go back to studying in their home villages and Bir Zeit students are now preparing for exams with a zeal and self-discipline that no curriculum can impose. The members of the Fatah cell to which Nadia Al-Khayyat allegedly belonged all studied at the Ramallah women's teacher's seminary; the group of East Jerusalem intellectuals deported across the Jordan in 1973 now hold key positions in the executive organs of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The boomerang logic of oppression cannot be stemmed by collective punishment. Every curfew, every sealing of a house, every deportation or administrative detention strengthens Palestinian consciousness on the West Bank.

Twelve years ago the West Bank was in the final stages of an accelerated process of Jordanisation, while the people of the Gaza Strip regarded themselves as Egyptians of Palestinian origin. Today, in the era of the separate peace and the lie of 'autonomy', Palestine lives and breathes under the occupation. It may be true, as its apologists claim, that Israeli rule is 'liberal'. There are no gallows or firing squads and Israeli soldiers are probably less willing to fire into crowds of demonstrators than King Hussein's Bedouin troops. But opposition to Israel and its policies, as Bir Zeit students protested recently, is not their private intention or the cult of a few. 'It is a natural and universal human response to the subjugation which any occupation necessarily represents.'

OUT IEA TODAY

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The increasing desire for choice in education and medicine and its frustration by 'representative' government is revealed in investigations into private preferences and public policy in four surveys from 1963 to 1978 of priced choice between state and private services.

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NICARAGUA
Christopher Hitchens

50 years of US support for the Somoza dynasty makes criticism difficult now

America made me

AMERICAN ENTANGLEMENT with Nicaragua, which is now such an embarrassment to Cyrus Vance and Jimmy Carter, is not a recent thing. As early as 1927, United States marines were engaged on the side of the Conservative forces in the Nicaraguan civil war, where a young general named Cesar Augusto Sandino was making a name for himself on the Liberal side. American concern was dictated in part by the fact that neighbouring Mexico, which expressed an interest in Nicaraguan independence, had had the temerity to claim sovereignty over its own oil deposits. At any rate their superior military strength was sufficient to impose a peace on the Liberal forces. Sandino denounced the US and the treaty in theatrical terms.

> Come, you bunch of morphine addicts! Come and murder us on our home ground. I shall be waiting for you, not caring how many of you there may be. But remember that when that happens, the destruction of your greatness will echo in Washington's Capitol, and your blood will redden the white dome that crowns your famous White House, that lair in which you plot your crimes.

Sandino's men were bombed by American planes and driven into the hills. American intelligence reports pronounced him finished.

Even so, the Americans soon found themselves blitzing his headquarters again. But when they stormed it they found that he and his men had slipped away. It was the beginning of a romantic guerrilla movement of resistance which seized the imagination of the Spanish speaking world. American efforts to brand Sandino as just another Latin American 'bandit' were to rebound on them. Interviewed in one of his hideouts, Sandino showed an American reporter his heavy and mobile weaponry and asked, 'Where, except in Chicago, could a bandit travel around with 30 machine guns as part of his luggage?'

But the war became increasingly frenzied, with Brigadier General Frank McCoy sent by the State Department to supervise 'elections' and antagonising all sides by his high-handedness, while Sandino carried all before him in the countryside despite increasingly savage bombardment of peasants from the air. Nevertheless, the Liberals won the elections easily and Sandino withdrew from straight military tactics into a more political exile in Mexico, even putting out feelers for peace talks with the Americans.

Returning to Nicaragua in 1930, Sandino found people flocking to him as a result of a 'strategic hamlet' and 'free-fire zone' policy being used to starve the countryside into submission. Over the next few years, as H.L. Stimson (Secretary of State) and later Roosevelt attempted to disengage and 'Nicaraguanise' the war, they came to rely more and more on a self-styled 'General' Anastasio Somoza. By the time the Marines left, in 1933, Sandino was as strong as ever but Somoza was in charge of the National Guard.

In the ensuing chaos, Somoza's talents as a former used-car salesman were turned to great effect. While the politicians wrangled, he built up a stock of arms from abroad and when, in February 1934, the political leadership of Nicaragua invited Sandino to the capital for talks, Somoza's men took him as he left dinner in the Presidential Palace. Sandino was shot out of hand, with many of his aides and relatives, and their bodies were rapidly buried under the Managua airport runway.

Over the next few years, backed by his 'blueshirt' movement (itself modelled on European fascism) Somoza began to concentrate all power in his own hands. Eventually assuming the title of President, he was at all times assured of American support. Indeed, the old line 'He may be a son of a bitch but he's *our* son of a bitch' was coined for Somoza by Cordell Hull in order to allay Roosevelt's misgivings.

This record briefly explains why Sandino is the name adopted as emblematic by all opponents of the Somoza regime, and why the name Somoza has become synonymous with despotism in Central America. There have been two Somoza absolutists since the Thirties, both of them maintaining and extending the family monopoly on land ownership, credit, foreign aid and armed force. The Somozas helped America to isolate Cuba and invade both Cuba and the Dominican Republic. When the elder Somoza was shot by an assassin, President Eisenhower ordered special medical treatment for 'this great friend of the United States'. Half of all registered landholdings in Nicaragua, plus the national airline and national shipping line, are the centrepieces of the Somoza holding to this day. Sugar and cigar concessions, awarded by the US to compensate for the 'loss' of Cuba, also swell the funds.

But Somoza III went too far last year when he assassinated Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, opposition spokesman and editor of the independent paper *La Prensa*. Chamorro, too, came from a dynasty of politicians, but he was popular on a wide spectrum and there has been no peace since he died. For the Americans now to try and 'disengage' from Somoza while continuing to refuse recognition to his opponents is utterly futile.

Dictators Never Die. A Portrait of Nicaragua and the Somozas. Eduardo Crawley. C. Hurst and Co. £6.95.

DC-10

Safe at some heights

Paul Eddy writes: News from Washington this week that the DC-10 is more glass-jawed than most people could have imagined came at a bad moment. Last Monday, the day after the story broke, McDonnell Douglas were due to appeal against the Federal Aviation Administration's order which has kept the US fleet of DC10s grounded since 6 June. At the last moment the company asked for a one week postponement of the hearing. Ever optimistic about the DC10, the *Financial Times* saw this as a good sign: since the FAA has been spared the burden of testifying, it can get on with re-assuring itself about the airworthiness of the DC10, and '. . . the aircraft could be flying again within two to three weeks'. Maybe. But if so, the fact that *all* DC10s lack a basic safety system which could have prevented last month's Chicago crash (a timely revelation of the *Washington Post*, ignored by the *Financial Times*) means that the definition of airworthy will have been mightily stretched.

To get off the ground the DC10, like most modern jets, depends on slats – metal plates fitted to the front edges of the wings, which are extended at slow speeds to provide extra lift. But unlike *all* other jumbo jets the DC10 is not equipped with locks to prevent those slats from retracting, should anything befall the hydraulic systems which normally hold them in place.

At Chicago, of course, something did happen. As the NS first reported (1.6.79), when an engine departed its mounting during take-off, it severed unprotected hydraulic cables running through the front section of the right wing. Robbed of hydraulic pressure the slats on the left wing retreated into their housings. On the right wing, however, the slats remained extended. The inevitable consequence was a violent role to the left, as the port wing dropped.

Could the pilot have done anything to save the plane? If the original safety certification of the DC10 is to make any sense at all then the answer *must* be yes. For, having chosen not to fit slat locks – which would have involved some complicated engineering – McDonnell Douglas was supposed to prove to the FAA that the plane was capable of safe flight with asymmetric slats. And, indeed, successful asymmetric test flights were made before the DC10 was certificated. But what has now emerged is that in those tests the slats were not made asymmetric at critical moments of flight, such as take-off. FAA test pilots only tried the trick when they had enough height to recover from the consequences. Asked if his company's test pilots had been bolder, John Brizendine, president of the Douglas Aircraft Corporation, said: 'I would doubt it.'

So, nobody knows for sure if the DC10 can survive an acute loss of symmetry at take-off. And, curiously, the tragic fate of the Chicago DC10 does not necessarily provide a definite answer because the pilot apparently laboured under other appalling handicaps besides the loss of his left wing engine and slats.

According to the testimony of crash investigators in Washington the departing engine also destroyed all the electrics which power the cockpit warning systems. Thus, the investigators say, the pilot had no way of knowing that the slats had retracted or that the aircraft was about to stall. In all probability, he did not even know he had entirely lost one of his engines.

All of which seems to make utter nonsense of the claim that one can have 'unqualified confidence' in the DC10 so long as the engines do not fall off. It is not difficult to think of other possible causes of hydraulic failure and, hence, asymmetric slats occuring at a critical moment: for example, a collision with the paraphernalia that litters the ends of runways.

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TRADE UNIONS
Paul Routledge

Will next week's miners' conference see a Scargill advance?

The miners' next step

NOW THAT THE phoney drama over Joe Gormley's early retirement has been resolved by an official communique that he is definitely staying, politics within the National Union of Mineworkers have reverted to their customary Byzantine complexity.

Not that the organised Left in the union was ever under any illusion about the president's long-term intentions. Arthur Scargill, the Yorkshire pitmen's leader regarded as front runner for this position, was 'tipped off' by Gormley that he would quit this autumn long before Fleet Street swallowed the canard entire. He didn't believe it then, nor did the comrades in what he likes to call the 'progressive' group. Which is just as well, because one reason for the whole charade must have been to flush out the Left's intentions in the race for the presidency. The 'progressives' refused to be stampeded into choosing a candidate for an election that never took place. But even though the argument has been settled for a year at least, the issue of the succession and its political ramifications will dominate next week's NUM policy-making conference in Jersey.

Much more than personalities is at stake. For though their numbers have shrunk below the 250,000 mark, the miners still occupy a special place in the labour movement, enhanced by the devastating success of their strikes in 1972 and 1974. Where they refuse to go, few other TUC affiliates dare to tread.

The NUM conference is almost exactly divided between Left coalfields – Yorkshire, Scotland, South Wales, Derbyshire and Kent, who muster 129 votes – and the Right-wing areas – Nottinghamshire, Durham, Northumberland, Lancashire, the Midlands, cokemen, various craft groups and the white-collar Colliery Officials and Staff Area. Though they represent fewer actual miners, this ramshackle coalition can usually call on 136 votes, but it only takes one coalfield or craft group to switch sides and the Left can triumph.

There is a long history of machine politics in the union. Before every monthly executive meeting, the two rival political groups meet in Bloomsbury pubs to plot tactics. It is a fairly simple affair at executive level, where the cynical preservation of an obsolete and unrepresentative structure gives the 'moderates' a built-in majority of 15 votes to 10. But at conference, representation is based on coalfield membership, and the problems of preserving that political hegemony become acute.

And so democracy in the union is a big issue. This year, once again, Yorkshire is trying to change the rules to get a bigger representation on the executive. At present, Scargill's 66,000 pitmen are entitled to just three seats, while the practically-defunct Cumberland coalfield with one pit and less than 1,000 men gets one seat. Other tiny 'rotten borough' coalfields such as North Wales, Leicestershire and South Derby, with less than a handful of pits each, also get one seat. So do the cokemen, and even the anomalous group of Yorkshire surface workers who belong to the General and Municipal Workers' Union.

Scargill's proposed rule change would give Yorkshire two more seats on an expanded executive of 27 voting members. The political balance would then be 15-12 to the Right – tight enough to be upset disastrously when occasional waverers like the Scottish craftsmen refuse to be whipped-in.

Can King Arthur (left) defy the nation's press by succeeding Gormley (right)? *Camera Press*

But rule changes require a two-thirds majority of delegates voting, and the Scargill democratic reform is destined for defeat (unlike 1971, when conference voted to change the majority required in a secret ballot to call a strike from 66 per cent to 55, paving the way for the first national stoppage since 1926). Another move towards greater democracy faces the same fate. Derbyshire, led by Left-Labourite Peter Heathfield who is seen by many as general secretary material, wants periodic re-election of officials. That would make the coalfield grandees look over their shoulder at the membership when casting executive votes. But the NUM is still an essentially federative body like its predecessor, the MFGB, and it is unlikely that the elderly incumbents of office will risk their jobs-for-life in the Left's push for democracy.

Their reluctance to let slip any of their powers makes the presidential election – perhaps in 1980 but more likely in 1982 when Gormley is 65 – critical for the future of the union.The election will be about two sharply contrasting philosophies, and now that the national vice-president Michael McGahey, president of the Scots miners and chairman of the Communist Party, has been ruled out on age grounds, the field has narrowed to two likely candidates.

Scargill will certainly stand, and the organised Left will be in a dilemma if it does not endorse his candidature. Scargill has built up a formidable machine of his own in Yorkshire, which last weekend delivered him a 13-4 majority in elections for the coalfield executive. The Left can now *guarantee* to deliver 55 per cent of the popular vote in Yorkshire, compared to only 20 per cent when Scargill escaped the anonymity of Woolley colliery in 1972. His supporters occupy key subsidiary roles in the area office, and the succession is sewn up ready for King Arthur's move to the NUM's marble-fronted office in Euston.

Joe Gormley is said to harbour hopes that once in office, and preferably the prisoner of a Right-wing dominated executive, Scargill will 'turn' and desert his Communist allies, who are privately weary of his highly-individual style. Those who accept that analysis point to the awful drubbing that the local CP has experienced since Scargill took over. The coalfield's leading Communist, Peter Tait, finally quit both party and Yorkshire recently to take over the general secretaryship of the Miners' International. Scargill's often close contacts with Gormley and his refusal to fight the last incomes policy settlement are pointed out as signs of a developing pragmatism, something Scargill denies.

His obvious rival is Ray Chadburn, the newly-elected president of Nottinghamshire who thrashed his Communist opponent Joe Whelan for what both men recognise is the top dog post in the second-largest coalfield. Nottinghamshire, with 34,000 members, has always been a bulwark of the Right, and never voted for strike action until 1974. Their leader has most often been the leader of the moderates' machine.

Chadburn is not nationally known like Scargill. He is an articulate, engaging man, a former chargehand electrician from Welbeck colliery on the Notts-Yorks border. Pit delegate and secretary before being elected to his first full-time agent's job less than two years ago, he has been on the executive only two months. After Gormley's ruling that men over 55 cannot stand for elective national office, he is being pushed into the heir-apparent's slot in a bit of a hurry.

The motto of Nottinghamshire miners, he argues, is 'work, earn a reasonable standard of living and enjoy themselves.' Chadburn's only serious rival is Trevor Bell, recently elected secretary of the COSA national area. Bell, a Yorkshire miner with a social science degree, was the union's industrial relations officer for many years before taking over the power base that propelled Sid Ford into the presidency before Gormley. He too has ambitions to national office, though in his case the target is more likely to be the general secretaryship. Though the incumbent, Lawrence Daly, is only 54, there are persistent rumours that he will retire early when the courts come through with damages for injuries he suffered in an appalling road accident several years ago.

Quite apart from its internal strife, the miners' union faces some serious industrial problems. The production bonuses so dear to Joe Gormley's heart have not proved the panacea they were cracked up to be. According to confidential Coal Board figures in the hands of the union, output actually *fell* last year, the first full year of partially decentralised collective bargaining. And so far this year, total output to 2 June is actually 1,989,000 tonnes down at 17,360,000 tonnes. Overall output per manshift is 3.3 per cent down, and last year coal lost by industrial disputes (largely over the incentive schemes) more than doubled to 1,488,000 tonnes.

An 'incentive' system that in one sample week in Yorkshire produced bonuses for face workers ranging from £2.05 to £66, and three colleries where face workers got less bonus than typists at Coal House, Doncaster, plainly needs some overhauling. Negotiations on that issue might divert attention from the basic rate argument, but there is no getting away from the wage ambitions of the Left. Yorkshire wants a minimum on the surface of £80 (more than 30 per cent up), and Scotland is demanding £140 at the face 'and if the Coal Board offer is unsatisfactory to consult the membership with a view to achieving our demand by industrial action.' Old Etonian David Howell, the new Energy Secretary, should take note.

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London Diary

☐ No one emerges from the Thorpe trial with less credit than does Mr Justice Cantley. His summing up was a model of the bias and the triviality which distinguish the British bench. 'Crook!' 'Whiner!' 'Parasite!' 'Sponger!' he shrieked at the wretched Norman Scott, who had taken the witness stand chiefly because his dog had been shot and he himself threatened with a gun in the middle of the night in the middle of a moor. The press, which had been so freely criticised by Mr Justice Cantley, dutifully echoed his freelance character assassinations all over their front pages.

Like so many judges, Cantley knew that any remarks he made were completely irresponsible. They were not subject to the libel laws, nor to proceedings for contempt of court. They could not be assessed by a higher court, since there would be no appeal against acquittal. He backed up his stirring defence of the defendants by ordering all journalists in court (for the first time on record in such cases) not to report that bail was revoked for the last two nights of the trial. And he failed to call back the jury after a reasonable time to ask for a majority verdict (an omission which might, apparently, have been crucial).

His summing up, like his attitude during all the trial, was peppered with the silly sniggers which pass for judicial humour. George Deakin, he mused, was the sort of man who 'might have a cocktail bar in his living room'. Peter Bessell's income 'would not be acceptable at British Leyland.' Isn't it time someone told these judges to keep their prejudices to themselves and to get on with their job – reviewing the evidence and explaining the law?

☐ Nothing that happened at the Thorpe trial was as bad as a libel jury verdict the previous week which found for Sir James Goldsmith against Granada reporter Mike Gillard. Mike Gillard is one of the very few journalists of my generation who is completely free not only of corruption but also of the ambition which lures so many journalists to their graves behind an executive's desk. The idea that he would blackmail anyone, as Sir James alleged, is grotesque. Yet the jury found otherwise.

The case was notable for its missing witness, the celebrated public relations man, John Addey, upon whose assertion in 1976 that Gillard was a blackmailer Sir James's case relied. Surely it is time now for Mr Addey to come forward and answer a simple question. Is Mike Gillard a blackmailer? If Addey says yes, why did he withdraw his allegation so unconditionally in court last year? If he says no, perhaps he will go on to tell us what inspired him to say the opposite in 1976.

☐ Saturday. To Manchester on a delegation from my union branch to a conference called Defend Our Unions organised by the Rank and File Movement. More than a thousand delegates – far more than the organisers had dreamed of – are packed into the New Century Hall in Corporation Street. The spirit and enthusiasm of the delegates is very high, and the message of the conference very plain: that there will be no effective defence of the immunities from the law which trade unions have won with so much effort and over such a long time unless there is agitation and organisation from the rank and file, from the shop floor. The best speech of the day in my judgement came from Avtar Jouhl, senior shop steward in the Birmid Qualcast foundries in the West Midlands. He was scornful of Callaghan's plea last week to the unions to shun 'political action'. 'The trade unions,' said Avtar Jouhl, 'are not there just to protect the economic interest of the workers. They must protect our *whole* interest, political, economical and social.'

☐ During a break in the conference I am delighted to come across Arthur Conheeney, who is the convenor of a middle-sized engineering factory in Warrington. Arthur is typical of the 'greedy trade unionists' you read about in Tory newspapers. Four years ago, during a strike against his arbitrary suspension, his employers offered him a golden handshake of £60,000 if he would go away and leave them alone. He refused, and soon won his job and his position back.

Like so many workers in that part of England, Arthur knows more about engineering than anyone in the Engineering Employers Federation. From his study of the catalogues and manuals which circulate in the industry, he tells me he is astonished at the number of small, high precision machines which have come on to the market from places like Taiwan and South Korea. Until recently, he explains, such machines have been manufactured exclusively in the industrial countries, but can now be made and exported at half the price in computerised factories in the Far East where there is very poor union organisation. He thinks that the effect of this on jobs in British engineering factories will be felt very quickly. What can be done about it? Back in the conference, we debate the 'solution' which is peddled ceaselessly by the official Left: import controls. The conference, by an enormous majority, votes against such controls, which divide the common interest of workers in different countries, and which keep prices high. The only answer, difficult as it is, is to forge stronger links and stronger organisation between workers all over the world.

☐ The only drawback in being in Manchester on Saturday was that I could not be at Lords to watch the final of the Prudential World Cup between England and the West Indies. Ever since, at the age of eight, I bowled four balls in a net off the Old Hope Road, Kingston, Jamaica to George Headley (the greatest batsman in the history of the world), I have experienced only one completely uncomplicated pleasure: watching West Indian batsmen in full flood. So when the news is passed down the lines of the conference by a lot of grinning English chauvinist pigs that Gordon Greenidge has been run out, I am plunged in gloom. Scampering back from the station and settling in front of the telly for the highlights of the match, I get more than my full reward. Viv Richards makes 138. Well, I have seen that before. But Collis King, the last recognised batsman, hits 86 in an hour against a field which is scattered to all corners of the boundary. Wonderful.

I reflect upon a mystery. Since 1948 I have enthusiastically supported Glamorgan County Cricket Club. (Don't ask me why or I will be forced to admit that it is because Glamorgan won the County Championship in 1948.) In recent years Glamorgan have signed three of the most exciting batsmen of modern times: Roy Fredericks, Majid Khan and Collis King. Each one of them has left the club in disarray. What is wrong with Glamorgan? Could it be, perhaps, that Collis King doesn't like the atmosphere in Wales?

Apparently not. I read in the *Cricketer* that Collis King was signed last year for a short spell by Pontblyddn (population 200), which is near Mold. In 12 innings he made 1,115 runs with an average of 139. He hit 74 sixes and 92 fours. The result of one important match was as follows:

> Pontblyddn. 391 for 7 (King 283 not out).
> St Asaph 11.30 (King 6 for 2).

All this gave such tremendous pleasure that the authorities quickly put a stop to it. Collis King has been banned from the North Wales league because he is 'too good'. This will disappoint thousands, among them countless NS readers who would have enjoyed my Mold Diary (about the vital economic issues facing North Wales) which I was planning for August.

☐ I was reading the proofs of my last diary when Dame Judith Hart, the former Labour Minister for Overseas Development, rang the NS office and asked to speak to the diarist. Could I, she asked demurely, spare a paragraph to put her point of view about accepting an honour in Jim Callaghan's dissolution list? 'I think honours are terribly out of date,' she explained. 'But Jim gave this to me in recognition of my services to the Third World, and whatever you think about Jim you *know* how committed he is to the Third World. I just felt it wouldn't be fair to the Third World to refuse it.'

Well, of course, I understand the Dame very well indeed and was deeply apologetic that I would have to wait a fortnight before reporting her position on this vital matter. The only surprise is that Callaghan did not create a special honour for Judith Hart: the QUC, which would stand perhaps for Queen of the Underdeveloped Countries. Or perhaps for Quite Unimaginably Conceited.

Paul Foot

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Sir – So the Tory Party has – among other things – decided to increase Value Added Tax to 15 per cent. I wonder if anyone realises that this means that the very poorest section of the community will be badly hit? I refer to stray animals. – Letter in *Daily Telegraph* (Ian Martin)

☐ Mr Bill Sirs, general secretary of the union, the biggest in the shrinking and troubled steel industry, presented the Prince of Wales with a 22-carat gold-plated figure of a steel worker made by redundant members of the union in North Staffordshire. – *Guardian* (Talat Aslam)

☐ 'We accept that students have to live somewhere, but not in a residential community. It would change the whole character of the place.' – *Kentish Gazette* (H. L. Fenn)

☐ Mr Hartmann, who visited Sir Rupert in gaol yesterday, went on: 'When I asked him what it was like in gaol, he said it wasn't too bad – "no more so than Harrow".' – *Guardian* (Martin Bulmer)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Facts are facts – even in the West Bank

Sir, It was kind of Marion Woolfson (Letters 15 June) to add some information to my reference to the curfew imposed on the West Bank town of Halhoul in March this year. She is quite correct in pointing out that two Palestinian student demonstrators were killed in the incident that preceded the punishment. Due either to faulty telex transmission or unusually zealous editing my original sentence 'shot dead while throwing stones at an Israeli car' was transformed into 'shot at for throwing stones . . .' – an unfortunate error.

I am somewhat baffled, however, by Ms Woolfson's certainty about the precise circumstances of the killing of Hassan al-Anani and Rab'a Al-Shalalda. She states categorically that 'the car contained armed settlers from Kiryat Abba who opened fire on the students' and that 'a soldier who was attacked shot into the crowd and (the two) were both killed.' Who told her so?

Separate enquiries by the investigation section of the Israeli military police and the civil police's Criminal Investigation Department have so far failed to establish who fired the fatal shots. But as far as the latest published findings show, Ms Woolfson is wrong on both counts: some shots were fired by a man travelling in a taxi from Beersheba to Jerusalem, who has not yet been apprehended; and the bullets found in the bodies of the deceased were not of a calibre issue to soldiers.

It is now generally believed that the two Palestinians were in fact killed by civilians, and not, as Ms Woolfson implies, by the army. However, as there is no final report on the incident, Ms Woolfson's version might even *turn out* to be true. But that is not the point. At the time she wrote her letter she could not possibly have been in possession of information that would enable her to give what was presumably intended to be the definitive account of the shooting.

Ms Woolfson is undoubtedly more well meaning than the Israeli journalist who wrote that Al-Anani and Al-Shalalara had 'met their deaths' – and thus avoided tackling the mystery of who killed them. But the mystery is still unsolved and facts, even in the occupied West Bank, are facts. They should be respected by people who take the responsibility of transmitting them to a wider public. Sympathy for one cause or another does not provide exemption from this elementary obligation.

IAN BLACK

Jerusalem

On giant's shoulders

Sir, The Writers' Guild (NS 15 June) does not customarily arbitrate on credits in television but only for feature films, and it was at the particular request of Marjorie Wallace that an exception was made in this case. She was warned that as a result of the arbitration she could end up with a worse credit than the one offered by the BBC. However, she insisted on the matter being decided by arbitration and promised to abide by its findings. The Guild also offered to take up with the BBC under our normal conciliation procedure her complaints about her treatment by the BBC. However, Miss Wallace has not taken up this offer.

Following the arbitration, telephone calls and personal visits from Majorie Wallace were now inflicted upon all concerned, with tears and pleadings for the credit originally offered to her. (The arbitrators must have blessed the inviolable rule of anonymity designed to protect them from just this kind of unscrupulous personal approach.)

However, the right of the Guild to conduct arbitrations, whereby the professional accolade of a screen credit is judged on behalf of writers solely by their peers, has been fought for too hard and means too much to be subverted.

Under our Screenwriting Credits Agreement with the Film Producers Association there is an automatic credits arbitration whenever a director or producer claims a joint credit with another writer, and the impartiality and professionalism of a Guild credits arbitration is guaranteed by the fact that at any time any writer may have need of it. Its rules obtain throughout the Affiliated English-Speaking Guilds of America West, America East, Canada and Australia, and professional writers of the highest standing are prepared to accept the judgement of their peers, even when the verdict goes against them.

The most disquieting feature of this time-consuming and, we suggest, rather dishonourable contest has been the degree of influence which Marjorie Wallace appears to be able to exert upon her fellow-journalists, all urging her rights above those of her fellow-playwrights. Evidentaly she is not *quite* such a 'Lone Cowgirl' as was suggested in your article.

ROSEMARY ANNE SISSON
BRUCE STEWART
Co-Chairmen

Writers' Guild of Great Britain
430 Edgware Road, London W2

Labour and the press

Sir, John Lee's proposal (Letters 8 June) for Trade Union militancy to drive national newspapers which support the Conservative Party out of business appears to ignore the real reason why there are more Conservative than Labour dailies on sale.

The TUC ran the old *Daily Herald* at a loss for years, and when Mr Wedgwood Benn made a determined effort to sponsor a Labour paper in even such a Labour stronghold as Glasgow, it failed. As Mr Benn said at the time, the paper had to close down down simply because it did not sell.

There seems to be a strong individualism in many loyal Party members or supporters in that they will not buy a daily which gives them politics. Even the *Daily Mirror* has to cut its left wing political features to a minimum to keep its circulation, and the *Guardian*, seeing no readership amongst Liberals, has become anti-Tory without becoming pro-Labour.

Conservatives are willing to read political features, and Labour supporters undoubtedly buy a lot of Conservative papers possibly for their sports coverage. The NS has an appreciative readership once a week. Even if the Trades Unions were to suppress the Conservative dailies, there would be no guarantee that the public would buy the Labour papers set up to replace them.

G. L. SMITH

44 Devonshire Street
London W1

Sympathy

Sir, I was surprised to see that Paul Foot (London Diary, 15 June) confused secondary picketing with sympathetic picketing. His stroll down to the Grosvenor to support the hotel workers on strike was surely sympathetic – it would have been secondary if he had decided to picket the offices of the NEW STATESMAN in support of their strike.

JANET CLEEVE

65 Glanville Road
Blenheim Gardens, London SW2

Against slavery

Sir, Hugh Brogan's letter on anti-slavery (NS 8 June) shows how careful one must be when attempting irony. Not only do I believe that the history of abolitionism has much contemporary relevance – I hoped to imply some parallel between official British abolitionism in the 19th Century and official British deprecation of UDI and apartheid in the 20th – but this was the very reason that I took up Brogan's original claim that Castlereagh did more to put the Atlantic slave trade 'on the way to extinction' than any other Englishman apart from Wilberforce or Clarkson. Brogan now acknowledges that the trade continued for another 50 years following the Convention negotiated by Castlereagh and does not contest that nearly two million Africans were brought to the Americas by the slave traders in this time. In so far as British anti-slave trade treaties somewhat reduced the volume of the trade it was thanks to the diplomatic efforts of Palmerston not Castlereagh. But overshadowing these largely ineffective treaties was the massive structural involvement of British capitalism with plantation slavery through mutually advantageous trade relations with the slave-owners.

In his latest letter Brogan emphasises not so much the imminent extinction of the slave trade in 1815 but rather the outstanding contribution to British abolitionism supposedly made by Castlereagh, a contribution only exceeded by that of Wilberforce and Clarkson. But this line of argument is untenable. Charles James Fox, James Stephen, Fowell Buxton, Brougham and Palmerston, to mention only a few, made vastly more important contributions to the abolitionist campaigns and policies of the British government than did Castlereagh. It is particularly strange that Brogan fails to mention James Stephen, a more impressive man than his brother-in-law Wilberforce, who played a crucial role in securing the passage of the highly effective legislation suppressing the British slave trade, as has been amply demonstrated by Roger Anstey in *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition*. Castlereagh's only contribution to this decisive phase of abolitionism was to speak against the 1806 resolution which paved the way for the Bill of the following year suppressing the British trade.

The sheer perversity of Brogan's judgment on Castlereagh is a good example of a historiographic vogue that one might call reactionary re-bunking. After this attempt to salvage Castlereagh's reputation perhaps some alert historical revisionist will draw our attentions to the libertarian implications of Bentham's penology, Palmerston's concern to alleviate the lot of the Irish peasant, the achievements of British non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War, or Harold Wilson's part in putting Ian Smith's regime 'on the way to extinction'.

ROBIN BLACKBURN

10 Eccleston Square
London SW1

A villain confesses

Sir, Takin' me pen in 'and I'll come clean abaht that word 'demity' wot I forged in larst weeks comp.

I started goin' bent wiv tryin' to imitate the big firms like Joyce an' Donleavy an' that. Me first offence was slippin' in 'pilky'. When they arsts I tells 'em it means silky-pink. I gets away wiv it an' goes from bad to worse coinin' me wossnames rotten I was. But yer gits careless like. Larst week I pokes the ringer in the first stanza don' I? Of all the stupid gits. They've only put Judge Amis, Old Falcon Eyes the master wordsmiff isself on the bench ain't they. Werl it's Bob's yer Markham innit? Bleedin' stroll on it was arstin' fer bovver. It's a fair cop Guv. If I gits arter this one I'm stickin' to straight oeds in future so's I can look me missus an' kids in the face.

GERRY HAMILL

2 Chelsea Mews
Bermuda Road, Cambridge

Gremlinology

Sir, Your readers might have been rather confused by the logic of the last paragraph of my article on the supplementary benefits review (NS 22 June). It suggested that because of the overwhelmingly hostile reaction to the review, it seems likely that the review team's report of the results of the public consultation exercise would be published. It should, of course, have read it seems 'unlikely'. Whether or not it is published will be a good test of the new Administration's commitment to 'open government'.

RUTH LISTER
Director

Child Poverty Action Group
1 Macklin Street
Drury Lane, London WC2

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Take a seat

Now that, year by year, an ever increasing percentage of the great British public disloyally abandons the ozone of Frinton and the balmy breezes of Ilfracombe and firmly takes its holidays abroad, there is, I am given to understand, similarly increasing bafflement and bewilderment among novice travellers who have, like poor old Britain, 'gone into Europe' and who discover in their foreign hotel bathroom a useful and watery hygienic contraption to which they are unaccustomed. I refer, of course, to the bidet (say it BEE-DAY, to rhyme with D-Day). One can imagine the anxious family discussion as to what its purpose can possibly be ('Oh look, Tracy wants to float her rubber duck in it!'). It seems to be the right height for squatting down on and is equipped with taps and a plug. A foot-bath perhaps? Obviously it is not intended to cope with anything elaborate such as paper, let alone anything else. Nobody likes to ask anybody outside the family for fear of being thought ignorant and unworldly. After some minutes of non-plussed contemplation, the decision is made to have nothing at all to do with it, except perhaps to use it as an emergency *pot de chambre* for that day when Jason's been on the what's-it for half an hour with Spanish tummy, and Cindy-Lou, with her knickers at risk, has just simply got to 'go'. Bidets in Benidorm must be accepted as one of the many hazards of travel and as unwelcome as that rather nasty foreign tea served in glasses.

The imaginary family of which I write probably does not have easy access to dictionaries but even if it did, the explanatory phrases for bidet do not get one far and primly withhold information as to the prime purpose of the contrivance. I do not run to the O.E.D. but my Chambers's 'Twentieth Century Dictionary' gives for bidet 'a bestridable bath and stand' – not bad at all. My Cassell's French-English section just says 'bath' – hopelessly misleading, and just picture yourself asking a frog chambermaid to prepare you 'a nice hot bidet'. Webster's International Dictionary Vol. I (A-L) gives 'a form of sitz bath', rather feebly transferring the burden of adequate description to German shoulders. And Webster, normally so lavish with its little illustrations of this and that, even with such esoteric subjects as a cardinal's hat, the flower of the gutta-percha tree, grapeshot and a primitive fire-engine, has refused to face the pictorial challenge of the bidet. A plain line drawing of one in use could have been most helpful and would certainly rank in importance with the flower of the gutta-percha tree, which most of us can manage without.

I wonder, incidentally, whether it was left to Webster's illustrator to choose which subjects he got to work on or whether Webster himself led the way ('Today I'd like you to tackle the rotary snowplough, with the weaver bird, if you've got time'). I rather think that only the artist was involved for there is a sort of divine inspiration in some of his work. Who, for example, could resist his likenesses – and here I'm dipping into the M-Z volume, in many ways my favourite – of the herbiverous spotted turtle (such a wise old face), the simple poleaxe, the immensely intricate 'working parts of a motor-car' (an earlyish model, I would say, and possibly a Hupmobile). Everywhere there is visible such a bold attack, such a wide sweep of interest. One moment it is mealy bugs lunching on peaches in somebody's greenhouse, and the next it is the rattlesnake, also on the look-out for something substantial to munch. We flash from a reverberating furnace for extracting lead from something or other (noisy, presumably) on to a rather intimate ventral view of the male squid, and then back to the Murphy Button, apparently a handy device for doing you up inside when the surgeon has been busy undoing you. Wherever you look there is something to catch the eye and hold the interest– panpipes, stilts, a set of wrenches, truffles and a treadmill in full operation with eight merry treaders at work. Very striking too is the illustration of the *trébuchet*, a military engine popular, except with those on the receiving end, in the Middle Ages and capable of lobbing rather large boulders over castle walls as a tactful hint to those inside that it was time to abandon the silly old siege.

Many years ago and during what we called at Cambridge 'the long vac', I went, full of energy, on a walking tour in Brittany with a friend. The sun shone and, having decided never on any account to tramp more than ten miles a day, we merely ambled along, setting out westwards from St Malo and keeping largely to the coast, where there was splendid bathing to be had in deserted coves. The fishy food was excellent and cheap. We became very sunburnt and enjoyed ourselves very much ('What about more lemonade?'). My parents had nobly stumped up the extra cash for the expedition, hoping that it would improve my French, though the opportunities for conversation were few ('*Bonjour*'). At the present time, when young people (and far younger than I then was) just set off into the blue and trustingly hitch-hike themselves vast distances across Europe and Asia, their absences and journeys appear to be taken quite calmly by their parents, who perhaps have little choice in the matter. But I write here of 1929 and our Brittany walking tour was the first occasion in my life when my parents would have no precise idea of where I was. They were kind enough to be anxious and my mother deftly opened up the lining of my jacket, inserted within a five pound note, and sewed it up again. Thus one would have something to fall back on when robbed and tricked and swindled by the rascally frogs, presumably uninterested in my jacket.

At one point we struck inland and found ourselves in Morlaix, an agreeable town of some interest and recently very much in the public eye for you can hardly have failed to spot in the press the sensational announcement that, among other *objets d'art et de vertu* put up for auction there a week or so ago, there was included Marie Antoinette's bidet. An anonymous 'collector' (though whether by that they mean that his whole heart is in bidets and nothing else or whether he likes chinaware in general we are not told) paid the equivalent of £3,900 for it, a paltry sum when you consider where such a unique object has, so to speak, been. But wherever, since the days when French royalty existed and could therefore splash about in it, has it been lurking? Why has this undoubted treasure only recently appeared? Why has it been kept from us? Who has been, as it were, sitting on it?

If only I had been once more in Morlaix and at the auction I would certainly have snapped it up. We do not have bidets in 'Myrtlebank' and this one would be too precious by far to risk ('Ooops!') in any practical way. Instead, I would have tried to make imaginative use of it. Potted up with geraniums, it would make an attractive feast for the eye in a window recess in my dining-room. Or what about using it as a container for the first course at lunch of *les crudités* (I could have done something fancy with bunches of baby carrots)? In the old days it would have done finely as a novel receptacle for the visiting cards that callers left in the hall. And how invaluable at a buffet supper, piled high with strawbugs or, in respectful memory of its owner, cakes. It would make a striking centre-piece for my dining-table, with water-lilies floating in it. Only too easy to draw the guests' attention to it. 'I expect you're wondering about my latest find. Rather a history to it, actually . . .' But too late now, alas. I must wait patiently until it reappears on the market.

The spoilsport BBC, often so firm in discontinuing something that clearly gives the public pleasure (and I wonder yet about Dr Dale and dear Mrs D, both great-grandparents by now I suppose), has never dared, and they'd better not, to lay its hands on either the superb Woman's Hour or the admirable Roy Plomley and his desert island discs. This delightful programme encourages, as you will know, the castaway to take with him to his desert island some treasured possession. I rather doubt whether this is quite the moment for the royal bidet. It might be, to male castaways, too sharp and poignant a reminder of facilities not available amongst the dunes. Washing, I mean of course.

Roger Woddis

Time to panic

The Organisation of American States has turned down a US proposal to send a 'peace-keeping force' to Nicaragua.

Thankless are the states that spurn
Secretary Cyrus Vance,
Having painfully to learn
Changing worlds mean changing pants.

Time was when good sense prevailed,
Using democratic means;
When, as frequently, this failed
There were always the Marines.

Now the poor man at the gate
Calls himself a Sandinista;
Gangsters, to avoid their fate,
Pack their luggage like Batista.

Needing native wages low,
Wall Street hires the heavy mob;
But, alas, they have to go
When they cannot do the job.

Though Somoza's fall from grace
May be followed by a hearse,
That is easier to face
Than the risk of something worse.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Martin Blinkhorn

Life After Death

Blood of Spain: The Experience of Civil War, 1936-1939 by RONALD FRASER *Allen Lane* £15

Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy by RAYMOND CARR and JUAN PABLO FUSI *Allen and Unwin* £10.50

Anyone who still regards the fashionable pursuit of oral history as not altogether respectable had better think again, preferably after first reading Ronald Fraser's massive and remarkable *Blood of Spain*. Worlds removed from the stultifying triviality of so much oral history, it is, quite simply, the most original and exciting study of the Spanish Civil War ever published. Constructed around over 300 interviews of Civil War survivors carried out in Spain during the two years before Franco's death in 1975, it also represents a triumph of good timing. Only a few years earlier, many of those who speak through Fraser's pages would have been unwilling to expose themselves to interview for fear of the possible consequences; in another ten years, many will doubtless be dead.

Few of those interviewed ever commanded a national reputation and even fewer enjoy prominence in the Spain of today. Most were ordinary Spaniards caught up in and, individually or collectively, helping to shape a major historical event: workers in factories and on the land; peasants, clerks and shopkeepers; students and professional people; priests, housewives and even children. Some were militants or activists on one side or the other, struggling to apply their particular remedies to the country's ills, while others found themselves drawn into the conflict through class, community or family loyalties. Many, it is evident, merely longed for a quiet life wherever they could seize it. Together their recollections make up a rich, complex mosaic of life and death, creativity and destructiveness, humanity and brutality in both war zones, arranged with great care and skill by an author whose knowledgeable and sensitive commentary gives the book its unity.

The Republican zone emerges, predictably enough, as entirely dominated by the various left-wing parties and trade unions and plagued by the fratricidal conflicts between them. The touching innocence of anarchist idealism is captured in the words of a young militant on the way from revolution-gripped Barcelona to collectivise his village in Aragon: no blood would be shed and nobody imprisoned, for revolution did not mean that 'half the world has to be killed so that the other half can live'. Other anarchists were less squeamish; libertarian idealism was besmirched in the towns by the violence of the movement's *enragés* and in the countryside by the coercive character of some collectivisation. The result, attested on all sides, was that peasants and petty bourgeois flocked into the embrace either of the Communists or of the advancing Nationalists. As for the anarcho-syndicalist union, the CNT, it proved to be 'a colossus with a head of clay', ideologically and structurally incapable either of carrying through a revolution or of restraining one.

Several witnesses pay somewhat overdue tribute to the enthusiasm, orderliness and discipline of the Communists in the early months of the Civil War, especially during the defence of Madrid in the autumn of 1936. These qualities have often been undervalued in comparison with the more immediate charms of anarchism, perhaps because they were all too soon placed in the service of what a number of Communists, past and present, now admit was an excessively sectarian policy towards left-wing rivals. The Communists' eventual dominance within the Republican zone and the failure of their strategy of subordinating social revolution to the supposed requirements of conventional war do not, of course, mean that 'revolutionary war' would have proved any more successful.

Fraser's own sympathy for the Spanish left is evident, yet it does not prevent him from granting due space to the different strands of sincere idealism which existed among Nationalists, or from understanding them. Thus a Catholic activist is remembered by his son as having voiced the social-Catholic longing for a harmonious Spain in which there would be 'social justice within a framework of order' and no vengeance exacted when the war ended; and a former Falangist recalls his desire to win back the working class for the 'patria' through the application of 'revolutionary' national-syndicalist doctrines. Mass support for Franco's 'crusade' is shown to have come mainly from peasants and petty bourgeois anxious to defend their semblance of independence and their religion against real or imagined attack. The presence of these elements in Franco's army or working contentedly behind the lines stands as testimony to the pre-war and wartime failings of the Spanish left. 'Once the left had gone', a Castilian ploughman told Fraser, 'we could all work for a day's wage peacefully again . . . we were happy.'

Such peace and quiet was nevertheless obtained at a ghastly cost. For all the idealism of Catholic paternalists and radical Falangists, and despite the honest if limited aspirations of the Nationalist rank and file, Franco's cause remained essentially that of a selfish ruling class, a class guilty before the war of wilfully obstructing social reform and during it of displaying a quite astonishing hatred of those whose ill-paid labour had created its comforts. Right-wing idealists and mere decent citizens were shocked to discover how many of their comrades expressed neither radicalism, nor paternalism, nor even concern in social matters. A devout Catholic, hiding in a Madrid embassy, was nauseated by the blind and harsh conservatism of his fellow fugitives, even allowing for their situation; endlessly they fantasised as to how they would eventually be free to 'kill, kill, kill all the workers, all the republicans, all the reds'.

The Spanish Civil War thus brought into being a regime based upon a 'blood contract', a 'Manichaean, absolutist division' between victors and vanquished which forms the starting point for a splendidly clear and vigorous analysis of Francoism by Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi. Franco, they leave no doubt, had every intention that this fundamental division should endure for at least as long as he did. The years following the Civil War witnessed nothing less than the continuation of the war by other means: the defeated suffered persecution, torture, imprisonment, exile or death, while the victors enjoyed office within the state or Franco's single party, together with the warming knowledge that they were on the side of Good against Evil.

For most of its length *Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy* eschews a narrative or chronological approach, though a sharp sense of chronology is always present. Rather it consists of a number of interlocking essays on various aspects of the Franco regime and of the society, economy and culture over which the Caudillo presided. There then follows a more-or-less straightforward narrative examination of the recent transition to democracy. It is a fascinating study of the development and ultimate self-destruction of a regime which, despite several attempts, proved resistant to any serious 'opening' as long as Franco himself lived, and yet could not survive his death. From the early years of agrarianism and scarcity behind a veneer of fascistic autarky reinforced by Spain's international pariah status, the regime emerged during the 1950s into 'the market' and by the end of the decade was hell-bent on industrialisation and modernisation. This process, deemed essential for Francoism's short-term survival, generated a new middle class willing to compromise with the regime yet increasingly impatient with its more stifling aspects, and a new working class increasingly unwilling to settle for the political apathy enshrined as a virtue by one of Francoism's ideologists, Fernández de la Mora.

Spain's recovery of the democracy lost in the 1930s may be the logical outcome of these contradictions, but Carr and Fusi successfully show how difficult it is to transform an authoritarian regime from within, above all in the face of resistance from a Head of State convinced of his God-given role and inspired by the notion of 'crusade' against the forces – communism, separatism, liberalism and masonry – which he had defeated in 1939.

Even before his grotesquely protracted death, Franco must have begun to wonder whether he had won after all. The abiding miracle of his years in power is the survival of opposition and its re-emergence during the 1970s to play a vital part in the dismantling of dictatorship. Of course this has in part been a pragmatic process carried out by Francoist *apparatchiks* and supported by economic interests for all of whom authoritarianism no longer serves the purpose it once did. All credit to Suárez and the King, then; yet Carr and Fusi are right to demand credit also for an opposition which could have sabotaged their strategy but whose combination of sustained pressure and responsibility actually helped it to succeed.

Let us hope there is a life after death, if only so that the late Caudillo may not be unaware of what is going on below.

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Harold Evans

Moment of Truth

Camera by GUS MACDONALD *Batsford* £7.50
The Camera at War by JORGE LEWINSKI *W.H. Allen* £9.95

Gus MacDonald, scything his way into our living rooms with his Glaswegian burr and his daguerreotypes, has written a book to go with the television series, or perhaps it is the other way round. There are about 400 Victorian photographs in this volume. They are excellently reproduced: a Cherry Blossom shine on the bottoms of the Zulu women posed to the taste of an unknown photographer, c. 1870, brilliant white edges to the polar icecap, 1911, satisfactory scowls on the faces of workers 'taking dinner break during the reconstruction of the Crystal Palace 1852-4'. Some of the book's collection is familiar – the Hill and Adamson calotypes of fishermen and soldiers, Roger Benton's cosmetic camera work of a Crimean War without corpses, Gardner and Brady in the carnage at Gettysburg and Antietam, and Eadweard Muybridge's freezing of horses in locomotion and of locomotive ladies in the altogether. But MacDonald has come across many fascinating images and photographers. George Wood – voyeur or pioneer? – photographed bathing parties at Hastings in 1893 with the *Weekly Times and Echo* growling: 'Several decent young men are forming themselves into a vigilance association with the purpose of thrashing cads with cameras who go about taking snapshots of ladies emerging from the deep. . .' And there is Platt d. Babbitt, the original promenade paparazzi, snapping tourists unawares in 1853 against the light of Niagara Falls and selling them his candid photographs. One day when Babbitt was working his pitch, a canoe with two men in it overturned up stream. One canoeist was swept away over the Falls but the other, John Avery, grabbed a log and clung there for 18 hours waiting in vain for rescue. Babbitt's picture shows the foaming rapids and the clear outline of Avery, and across the century we can catch the heart beat of his forlorn hope.

For most of *Camera* the simple narrative and eclectic images cohere with great effect and enjoyment. What a pity that in the final chapter MacDonald, antiquarian, is elbowed aside by a cruder fellow, who has a word from our sponsor. MacDonald, tellyman, concludes a book of photography with the news that television has buried photography and painting; painting is 'almost dead', anyway, and only pre-Granadaland photographs have anything to say. Electronic images are 'more vivid and convincing' than anything. This machismo about the moving picture is futile. Television has certainly impinged on the newspaper and magazine, though the news images are few – it is mostly radio with headshots. But television has not killed the still photo. It has a different function. It excites and it can inform, but it cannot easily be recalled by the mind, it cannot be pondered and it cannot be passed on.

By contrast the still photo isolates a moment in time in a way we can recall. Most of us, most of the time, find it easier to recall an event or person by summoning up a single image than a sequence of moving images. And the single image can be rich in meaning because it is a trigger image for all the emotions aroused by the subject. A simple example is the notorious occasion when a police chief shot a Vietcong prisoner in the head in a Saigon street. Most people can instantly recall that image. The effect of the same scene on television was considerable also but it is not the moving picture we remember. It is the still image and precisely because its 'stillness' preserves for ever, as Marvin Krone put it, an infinite fraction of the infinite time of the universe.

Jorge Lewinski tests our nerves in the opposite direction. He wants us to recognise photography as art and war photographers as artists whose best work 'can be placed next to paintings by Goya or Blake without detriment'. The brave and brilliant pictures from Vietnam by such as Philip Jones Griffiths, Don McCullin, David Douglas-Duncan and Larry Burrows did not so much tell us what the war was like but raised photography 'to the status of a recognised art form'. They did this, Lewinski explains (and they are his words not mine), by an act of artistic creation which 'externalised pictorially' their innermost thoughts on the world and endowed the images with 'aesthetic beauty'. Why can't he simply accept that the photographer did a good job of reporting? Photography is not painting and it isn't television either and people should stop fretting about it. But *The Camera at War* escapes its wordy thesis successfully enough to be a valuable book. It is a detailed presentation in 240 pages of pictures and text with many intriguing vignettes – Romano Cagnoni blacking up in the Biafra war so as not to be taken for a white mercenary; Ian Berry saved from being shot in the Congo by his lousy French; Horst Faas, the total pro, assessing the fighting fitness of American platoons before deciding whether to join their missions.

Bullet dodging apart, there are serious issues. If the aim is to show the reality of war, are there *any* limits to what is tolerable in photography? Are we anaesthetised by the professional instinct to make an appealing composition? When, if ever, should a photographer renounce his role as observer? Lewinski cannot resolve these dilemmas but his interviews disclose intriguing attitudes. Clive Limpkin heard some IRA men announce they were going to machine-gun three soldiers in the distance. He did not shout a warning; he focused his long lens.

Lewinski is also interesting in exposing a number of celebrated stills as fakes. But he goes too far in saying that Joe Rosenthal's famous picture of the flag raising at Iwo Jima was 'carefully worked out' or a 'subterfuge'. It was not. It was a genuine unposed action photograph, as I demonstrated in *Pictures on a Page*. No genius could have posed the picture if he had spent a year in a studio with lights, a wind machine, and six actors capable of keeping their heads turned away from a camera lens. If it's any help to Mr Lewinski and his concerns about photography as art, none of the paintings, engravings or sculpture based on Rosenthal's photograph has ever evoked anything like the same response as the photograph itself.

Malcolm Bradbury

Better Times

Stories by JOHN CHEEVER *Cape* £7.50

John Cheever's stories work in knowable spaces, and you could take 'Goodbye, My Brother' – the first and earliest story in this collection, and written just after the war – as sounding a good proportion of the notes of this admirable volume, and indeed of his work in general. A well-off American patrician family, three generations of them ('We are a family that has always been very close in spirit'), go off and summer together at their house on one of the islands off the Massachusetts coast. The beach is 'fabulous', the world of past middle-class comforts and family customs readily comes back. But there is a spectre at the feast. Lawrence, the narrator's brother, glares on all the proceedings; he is a dour, bitter man who has always said goodbye to everything to which he has attached himself. Under his glare, the family and the holiday begin to disintegrate; then the narrator strikes his brother down, and he leaves. The world of beauty comes back, the swimming resumes, and, 'full of grace . . . the naked women walk out of the sea'. The reader is left suspended, in an ironic space, somewhere between the virtues of the past, domesticity and grace, and the harsh dark doubt that is for a moment defeated, but simply cannot be ignored.

There are 61 stories here, the fruit of some 35 years of writing, and six volumes. Together it is a very impressive display of Cheever's powers. But the themes are indeed laid down early, and then stay, so that later pieces seem like mature reflections on earlier themes and characters. These are stories of love and squalor, set in a world in which momentary glimpses of brightness – sea, clouds, light, the East River, a wife in a torn slip at the dressing table – contend with time, social change, and the chaos of history. The stories shift in setting, but mostly along recognisable tracks, largely laid by the New Haven Railroad: from the holiday homes and the rural communities in Shady Hill and Bullitt Park to Manhattan, the city 'full of anxious relevations', the world of Babylon and Sodom where doormen drive their elevators for many miles a day up and down through 'that enormous stratum of the middle class that is distinguished by its ability to recall better times'. Time wastes; the faces of the fun-lovers in the elevators turn to the mirror and cry; there are precarious adulteries. The spectre is at the feast and the worm is in the bud.

In 'The Enormous Radio' a young married couple tune their new radio-set somehow into the quarrels, money troubles and infidelities that lie in the privacies of the rest of the apartment building; soon, too, they are quarrelling in the same tones. In 'Torch Song', the dark spectre is the girl you have always known, met in corridors or bars helping along some lover who is also a social cripple, until you too decline and she comes to claim you. The tales are all of social and emotional unease, the swansong of an American aristocracy in a lowered world; the stories may be

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told from the standpoint of those who are losing money but hope to retain, with whatever small corruptions, 'the tenuous racial claim to privilege', or from the angle of the ungainly Horatio Alger figures who have risked their aspiration on others' success, or from the viewpoint of the cooks and the doormen who service the apartment blocks and summer places and tangle in the brightness and pain.

In some ways Cheever's note seems suspect. He lies, in American writing, somewhere between Scott Fitzgerald and John Updike, in an intermediate generation, an intermediate form. As in Fitzgerald's novels, the feel of money grandly spent is still in the air; hats are worn, adultery is a guilty struggle, and characters can indeed succeed for a while in forgetting that 'the past plays no part in happiness', though often – one story works just by denying us this expected ending – the dark ghost comes in some fashion to collect. And, as in John Updike's stories, there is everywhere the sense of a world of secular and historical decay in which, nonetheless, certain glimpses of form, shape, light, wholeness, or love shine out as a momentary divine or symbolist goodness and at the same time reinforce the sadness of the whole. Cheever notes himself in his preface that 'The constants I look for in this sometimes dated paraphernalia are a love of light and a determination to trace some moral chain of being', and there are moments when the taste for a high-toned symbolist revelation seems a device of protection for a world that he wants to bring back from social decline. But in the better stories, such as 'The World of Apples', a late piece set in Italy, about an elderly poet who returns from a late bout of satyriasis to luminosity, the path to illumination is complex.

In fact there is no doubt where Cheever's sympathies lie; he is a storyteller of the wealthy, and the tales that leave this world weaken immediately. Yet at the same time in the best of these stories, the work of irony is devastating. This was the strength of his most recent novel, *Falconer,* the book that drew him so firmly back into notice and reminded us that he is still a profoundly inventive writer. That novel was set in an American prison, and took his patrician hero into the dense institutional mesh of a place that seemed to extinguish all hope and expectation, yet which yielded, in turn, its small miracles. The best of these stories – 'The Bus to St. James's', 'The Season of Divorce', and others – do this too. They appear, usually, to be stories of a loving realism, of invigorated materialism, and they have a dense clutter of wealth and appurtenance, of cocktail parties, ski-lodges, private schools and nurses in Central Park. But they are also usually close to the border of a special kind of fantasy, coming from the sheer economy of Cheever's social landscape.

Thus not only the stories that use the fantastic – like 'The Enormous Radio' – have a shimmer of surreality; so do apparently much simpler tales, like 'Just One More Time', where through a series of rapid vignettes the Beers, a couple who appear now up and now down, but 'always looking for somebody', pass beyond social existence into mysterious powers. Cheever is not an experimental writer, but he is something other than a realist. His narration is often bulky, and he can overwork an ending, yet the control is always there, and it lies in a tone so well managed that his stories have several existences.

Bevis Hillier

Licking Pissarro

Bernard Berenson by ERNEST SAMUELS. *Harvard University Press* £9.50

What Professor Samuels lacks in felicity, he makes up in tenacity. At this early stage of Berenson studies, that is a greater recommendation than literary grace. Most of the previously published works on 'BB', including the memoirs of Nicky Mariano and extracts from his own diaries, commemorate the older Berenson – as Samuels puts it, 'the legendary sage of I Tatti, the confidant of protégés and princes, and the serene diarist of a world transformed'. The subtitle of this book is 'The Making of a Connoisseur' and it deals only with Berenson's early years, carrying him up to the age of 39 in 1904. (He lived until 1959.) Already at 39 he was the supreme arbiter: Old Masters bought by American millionaries needed 'his visa on their passport'.

The prodigy was born a Jew in Lithuania. When he was nine the family emigrated to Boston, where his father was a pushcart peddler. The brilliant boy passed from grammar school to the Boston Latin School to Boston University to Harvard, where Santayana was a contemporary. Berenson was an out-and-out aesthete and looked the part, with a head of Renaissance curls. 'I made homosexuals' mouths water,' he later wrote; later, too, Oscar Wilde made a pass at him. Berenson become well-known as a contributor to the *Harvard Monthly*. Friends, including Mrs 'Jack' Gardner who was to be among his great patrons, paid for him to go on the Grand Tour of Europe. Like Henry James (whose Gilbert Osmond, in *Portrait of a Lady*, he so much resembled in chronic over-refinement) he was infatuated with Italy. He became a disciple of Giovanni Morelli, whose analytic method of comparing paintings feature by feature was called the 'ear and toenail' school by its detractors. He trained himself as an expert, wrote classic books on the Italian masters, made a living by advising rich collectors, and returned to America only rarely and reluctantly. He lived with and later married Bertrand Russell's future sister-in-law, Mary Smith Costelloe, who shared his interest in Old Masters: their lovers' quarrels were over attributions.

Berenson insisted that the coolly analytic method of Morelli should be reinforced by the art lover's intuition. He wanted to find out the secret of our enjoyment of art. This led him into amateur psychology based on the work of William James, Henry's brother. He sought art that was 'life-enhancing', not 'life diminishing', and he elaborated a weird theory of 'tactile values': Giotto's genius for seizing on significant detail enabled our 'palms and fingers to accompany our eyes much more quickly than in the presence of real objects'.

Berenson's dual appreciation of art, intellectual and emotional, suggests a wider theme which struggles to emerge from Professor Samuel's narrative: the battle between the cerebral and the erotic in Berenson's own life. Which won? Professor Samuels does not seem to have made up his mind. On page 47 he tells us Berenson was 'ardently passionate'; but only six pages later, referring to a short story Berenson wrote at Harvard, he writes: 'Like Robert Christie in the story, he knew himself to be more cerebral than emotional, and he relished his intellectual detachment like a character in a Henry James novel.' The other inward struggle was between pure, joyous scholarship and the booming business of commercial attribution. The second, fairly and sympathetically presented by Samuels, shows that BB was far from scrupulously honest, though he was also the victim of malicious rumours by dealers and collectors whose £40,000 Raphaels he had demoted to £4,000 Sebastianos.

The book constantly kindles when Berenson himself is quoted. 'The pleasure one gets from Botticelli is really an exquisite high-strung pain.' On restorers from Rome: 'the Sultan's silken cord was no surer death.' On the latest Pissarros: 'so sensuous they made me feel I could lick them.' One cannot have enough of this kind of thing; but it is a weakness of the book that Samuels relies too much on BB's own correspondence, and disregards some useful secondary works – for example, *Self and Others* (1936) by Sir Charles Holmes, director of our National Gallery, would have given him an objective view of Berenson's stance in the squabbles over the *Burlington Magazine*.

With for once genuine modesty, Berenson lamented that he was no writer – an opinion Samuels oddly seems to endorse. But to me the chief virtue of this book was that it sent me back to Berenson's own works. As a writer on art in English, he stands on the same plateau as Pater and Ruskin, resplendent with epigram and purple passage; and as a connoisseur, he was far greater than either.

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Helen McNeil

Power to Hurt

Poetic Artifice by VERONICA FORREST-THOMSON *Manchester University Press* £9.95

Empson was right. There can only be seven types of ambiguity, because seven is a magic number and ambiguity is the magic of the poem. But was Empson also wrong? According to Veronica Forrest-Thomson, Empson and the New-Critical formalists were simply not formal enough. While pretending to defend poetry against the fallacies of biography and subjectivity, they indulged in the worst fallacy of all, the thematic fallacy, using paraphrase to force external meaning on the artifice of the poem (a process of 'external limitation/expansion', as Forrest-Thomson unengagingly calls it). Shakespeare's Sonnet 94, 'They that have power to hurt and will do none', may have seemed to Empson and to most readers to be a contradictory record of rage and partial appetites, but for Forrest-Thomson Empson has it backwards. Empson 'operates at the level of meaning and thematic synthesis, naturalising the formal features straight away', when in fact 'it is the other areas of discourse, as they are fed through the level of meaning, that are tools for organising the formal structure of poems'. A mind of Empson's power and subtlety would hardly have confounded a poem with its paraphrase, but the gist of Forrest-Thomson's competitive argument is clear: beyond formalism there lies a vivid, undiscovered aesthetic – of formalism. The triumph of *Poetic Artifice* is to make such an apparently dead world seem, however briefly, a source of life for poetry.

Well and good, says the Comforter, but there's no need for a new formalism. We all know that all poems are 'about' poetry. While saying other things, poems are also about whatever their particular form conveys. A particular form generates its peculiar content. Swinburnian sentiments fade in free verse, and sonnet thoughts stick fast in ballad troughs. But this assumption of some kind of previously established mutual aid society between form and content is just what Forrest-Thomson loathes most. It leads to the egregious thematising she calls 'bad Naturalisation', a critical term which should enter the language immediately. From now on a critic should cringe in shame when he is tempted to crown a discussion of, say, Ezra Pound's 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' by sagely pointing out how closely imperialist Britain resembled imperial Rome. Bad naturalisation has extended uses too. Pound's fascism can be read as an appropriately disastrous lapse into naturalising by an otherwise suitably 'artificial' poet and critic. Even though Pound used Propertius to castigate Vergil for being 'Augustus chief of police', Pound's own crude externalisation of mythology led him to offer himself to Mussolini in the very same poetic policing role.

Critic after critic is tested, only to fail. Here Forrest-Thomson hits a limit: her book has only a meagre allowance of praise. In criticism and poetry a very small usable tradition has to be carved out of a big bad tradition. The smallness of Forrest-Thomson's artificial paradise comes from what is probably her book's most difficult ambition. Not only should the artifice of a poem be seen as the centre of its complex of meaning and meaninglessness, but the language with which to appreciate this must be drawn from an English literary-critical tradition which has been consistently hostile to such readings. French criticism is left out and linguistic studies are largely neglected.

To keep in English, *Poetic Artifice* has to recombine the old critical vocabulary in order to discuss what matters. Her recombinations are both personal and deeply literary, aimed at creating a linguistic space where literature is made. And that is the point. Like Eliot's *The Sacred Wood*, *Poetic Artifice* is a critical work which is meant to clear a space for its author's poetry. Forrest-Thomson's poetry is highly artificial and good, if her few examples are characteristic. It comes from an eclectic tradition which functions best if seen as a careful collection of influences: Shakespeare, Donne, Swinburne (a marvellous defence!), Pound, Eliot, Tzara, Empson (for his poetry), Ashbery, Plath, and Jeremy Prynne. Although Forrest-Thomson says that 'when language is re-examined, the world expands with it', she is really most interested in the break-up of meaning. She agrees with Tzara that the most important level of meaning to destroy is the syntactic. In the poetry she likes most, 'language filters external contexts into the poem and subjects them to new distancing'.

Even within the confines of her book, Forrest-Thomson's Alexandrian taste isn't, alas, always maintainable. Her love of artificial distances clashes with direct emotional identification and plain, old-fashioned dislike. For one of her taste she is inexplicably bored with Berryman and Stevens. Her slashing attack on Ted Hughes's purported naturalising is followed by an equally unconvincing defence of Sylvia Plath's purported artifice of the speaker. A poetics which likes to take 'I' as a speculative term is hardly the place to enshrine a poet whose last poems are an artifice of intimacy, among the most calculatedly personal declarations of the century.

Valentine Cunningham

Outside Track

A Pin to See the Peepshow by F. TENNYSON JESSE *Virago* £2.50
Entertaining Strangers by A. R. GURNEY JR. *Allen Lane* £5.50
Occupational Debris by STUART EVANS *Hutchinson* £5.95

'Women can't write', grouched Virginia Woolf's uncharming Tansley, monstrously wrong. There are masses of women writers. The trouble is that the men-managed syllabuses still prefer male feebles like E. M. (A-Level) Forster to many better females. So Elizabeth Bowen and Jean Rhys are consigned to the outside track, and Fryniwyd Tennyson Jesse is shut right out of the stadium. Not, though, perhaps, for long: thanks to Virago, now busily reissuing her – with other too neglected ladies.

A Pin to See the Peepshow (1934) makes a superb analysis of the plights a woman from the tightly respectable London suburbs is led into by her persistently dwelling gullibly in fictive visions of men and love – fictions for richer or more courageous ladies. Julia's tragedy is to be petit-bourgeois, locked into the Wellsian confines of the District Railway system, Stamford Brook Station, Two Beresford Villas. There, lovers are plumply waistcoated licensed victuallers and gents' outfitters.

She won't give up job or Herbert for her romantic naval-aircraftsman Leo. She's never sought real emancipation: that means

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tangling with the 'shrieking sisterhood'. So she's meshed into a 'sordid and commonplace' tussle between men for old-fashioned ownership of a woman. And when would-be possessor ('I must have you for myself always') slugs husbandly owner ('Nobody else shall have you'), Julia fetches up in the condemned cell as an accessory to murder.

If only Julia could see. But she has always loved the blurred, romantic gaze. Her enthralled glimpse into the peepshow-box owned by Leo when he was just a cheeky brat at school is characteristic. Julia prefers Stanley Weyman and Seton Merriman to reality. Short-sighted, astigmatic, but vain, she won't put on her specs. Significantly, her one public appearance in specs is after confronting the ineluctably grim realities of a back-street abortionist's parlour.

F. Tennyson Jesse's way with her woman reminds one constantly of better-known authors. Julia's yearnings for a room of her own that a husband won't invade recalls Virginia Woolf, as do the rosters of near-anonymous women (Milly Benson, Maggie Parsons, Hilda Smythe). How much, one wonders, do Iris Murdoch's dealings with the Goldhawk Road owe to this novelist? Above all, in the comparative way, everyone who has supposed that Orwell's 'A Hanging' said the last word against capital punishment should share Julia's extraordinarily compelling final night before the rope.

Entertaining Strangers is as soberingly funny as the greatest of campus novels like *Lucky Jim* or *The History Man*. Porter Platt, ageing and failing Humanities man in an Institute of Technology in Massachusetts, thinks he's found an ally in Chris Simpson, Etonian, Oxonian, coolly learned. Simpson will show all those zippy, published Jews what the Great Tradition, what Englishness, really mean. Alas, Simpson quickly emerges as not only a mere Rhodesian, and one, to boot, whose residence in Oxford is highly dubious, but a cuckoo in the Humanities nest. Hospitality is abused, Platt's wife is picked up only to be (worse) waived, Course-Chairman Schwartz is smoothly ousted. So Perlmutter, Blum and Hoffman were right about this shit? The only one with solid job security at the end is Simpson.

A. R. Gurney works – as the genre expects – in terms of set pieces. The novel tends to run from joke to joke: and after all campuses rebut neat forms and relish their serendipity. Platt's changing concept of his book about the American Family – *Neglected*, *Dejected*, and finally *Connected Sector* – grants a sort of shape, but it's one whose messiness is its greatest charm. Indeed, loops like Platt and the others, wryly self-doubting givers of courses on the Western Tradition, are made to seem – like the campuses and campus fictions where their shamblingnesses totter on – the tradition's best guarantors.

Stuart Evans tries to be Iris Murdoch. And *Occupational Debris* has the right cast: TV-persons, Fellows of New College and All Souls, philosophers from LMH. They have the right names: Guy Walker, Morgan Rice, Roger Ingestre. And the right locales: bistros in SW7, wine-bars in NW3, New College, All Souls, LMH. It's a specially achieved tone. (After all, to quote from these pages, 'how many people have you met who got divorced and a first in PPE all in the same year?') But easier to catch than Murdoch's intellectual touch. Which is missing.

Crime Books

John Coleman

Things Could Be Worse

It is with something very like relief that we turn from the front page of our newspaper, with its daily freight of economic crises, hijackings, summit sophistries, political scandals, murders, muggings and rapes, to the first page of the latest thriller. Things could always be worse and a small army of crime writers is there to tell us so. At one blockbusting extreme comes Shane Stevens's *By Reason of Insanity* (Weidenfeld £5.95), a ghoulish extravaganza kept this side of credibility by its nagging pursuit of detail, its numbing size. 'The ten days that shook Chicago were among the happiest in the young life of Thomas William Bishop.'

Bishop is a 25-year-old rapist extraordinary, possible son of the real-life Caryl Chessman, twisted product of a mad mother's beatings and recent escapee from a mental institution. He sets out on a psychotic, cross-country crusade, leaving behind him a hideous trail of sexually mutilated corpses. A lone-wolf reporter, Adam Kenton, with a gift for empathy, is empowered to track him down. Taking plenty of time out for a cast of supporting characters with their own axes to grind (notably, a college professor whose renowned published studies of mass murderers lead him to sickly hopes that this new genius will avoid capture for a bit longer), the tale essentially resolves into a cutting to and fro between the minds of Bishop and Kenton, down to a last cunning confrontation in a New York hotel for women only. Some sympathy is invited for the childhood tortures that have warped the killer irremediably; and Mr Stevens, further intent on infiltrating his gruesome ingenuities with some saving morality, has several of Bishop's best tricks learnt from exposure to TV back at the asylum. It's a grey, grey world.

Patrick Alexander's brilliantly diverting *Show Me a Hero* (Macmillan £5.95) transports us into a pretty ashen domestic future, Britain in the 1980s under a sinister, pseudo-leftish National Democratic Party with emergency powers. A resistance movement has sprung up, led by an ill-assorted cabal of right-wingers and men on the make and working towards a major onslaught known as Operation Volcano. Tom Ashman, romantic rough diamond, ex-boxer and iron leader of daring robberies to fund the big day, is the uneasy hero among these two-faced *maquisards*, a hell of a creation, impervious to torture and beloved of sexy, upper-middle Beth. Against him is smooth, admiring Cunningham, head of Tac Force, the secret police. A finely described bullion snatch of deep implausibility succeeds, but bad luck has Ashman caught. From then on, it's a duel of brains and guts between him and the sophisticated, rule-bending Cunningham, a thorn in the flesh to his own immediate bosses. There is much wit in both dialogue and situation, a marvellous brusque tenderness in the love interest, a high level of literacy with apt quotations quite flying through the air. But when Operation Volcano erupts, the new lot will prove as self-serving as the old.

David Grant's *Moscow 5000* (Michael Joseph £5.95) is the longer and better of two opportunist entertainments zoned in on next year's Olympic Games. Ukrainian dissidents propose to explode a hugely lethal ground-level cluster-bomb on the day of the 5000 metres final and the twin sure-fire excitements of who'll-win-the-race and what-about-the-bomb-then are steadily built to. Sports buffs will find the runners a thoughtful assortment: the Russian pair, only one of whom is programmed to win; a worried French shamateur; a pot-smoking US boy wonder with a Polish high-jump girlfriend who wants to defect; and an angry Ugandan who stays on when his team is ordered home by Amin. Tough, Mr Grant, about the ineffable Idi, but history will out. The KGB and CIA keep more than an eye on things. As they do in Tom Barling's *The Olympic Sleeper* (Eyre Methuen £5.50), a terse, sharply written, fiendishly contorted chase-around, with our flint-eyed superman Lewis Stone suspected of double-agentry and given to snarling such snappies as 'Stuff your thanks where the capuchin keeps his cashews!' Barling's bombers are the PLO, with louche

Thrillers

Genesis and Structure of a Popular Genre

Jerry Palmer

This fascinating study deals with the origins and development of what is arguably the most successful genre in popular literature. It tackles the questions: what is a thriller? why did the thriller emerge when it did? how does one account for its popularity? and is the thriller dead? These questions cannot be answered without an extended exploration of thrillers, their origins in other literary forms and their roots in social reality, and a consideration of the notions of the hero, of personal competitiveness and of conspiracy.

This book is a lively analysis of a popular literary phenomenon, and an important contribution to the sociology of literature.

Boards £8.95 Paper £4.75

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Mia Ferouche on hand, but all is not what it seems.

Our age of acronyms, angst and expertise lends itself wonderfully to inside-jobs, lordly bafflements rendered palatable by authentic VIPs hovering in the wings or the deployment of special knowledge – or both. A. J. Russell's *Pour the Hemlock* (Gollancz £3.95) belongs to the first category, returning to the last months of Nixon to weave a many-stranded web from which *this* fly extricated himself with the greatest difficulty before resuming his proper reviewing place on the wall. One Beaudine, a sinologist high up in Project Psyche which does psychiatric evaluation by computer, stumbles into a battle for power involving the CIA, the FBI, the Mafia, a lovable Irish revolutionary-turned-New-York-society hostess, a corrupt new Presidential candidate, and a mysterious band of Amerasian 'mongrels' reared by a millionaire Red Indian. Not surprisingly, it zips along like billyo (it would have to). Beaudine, in a last flare of rage, saves the good old US of A's bacon till the next time.

Second category intrigue, developed round a fascinating core of swotted-up professional gen, is pleasantly to the fore in a trio of books dealing out thanks for help in their researches. Martin Page's *The Pilate Plot* (Heinemann £4.95) has another rugged British operative disowned by his employers, as he picks up a papyrus from a Cypriot refugee camp and – learning more of its importance – tucks it away for safe keeping. The 'Albanian' gag from *The Ipcress File* is recycled (why not?); a green-eyed lady lawyer gives the recalcitrant hero her all; ruthless agents of the Vatican and Israel tail the pair. The keenest matter centres on the contents of that papyrus – does it contain Pontius Pilate's report to Tiberius on the trial and execution of Jesus? and, if so, what are the implications? – and the technical details of its verification. Richard Cox's *Auction* (Hutchinson £5.50) delves into corruption in the art world via warring factions over a Nazi-looted Botticelli and a conducted tour of London, Vienna and East Berlin culminating in an engrossing maxi-auction in New York. Convincing, amusing, informing, Ronnie Mutch's *Gemstone* (Hutchinson £4.95) beguiles similarly for the diamond trade as a boorish South African gets taken for a ride, along with his old-school English chief, by a winsome crew apparently able to synthesise stones and so screw the market. Faceted, sparkling, neat.

'. . . how much easier things seemed to be for Inspector Van der Valk or Maigret.' So reflects the newest in an agreeable succession of exotic sleuths, mild, uxorious Superintendent Otami of the Hyogo Prefectural Police, as he gloomily gazes at the body of a 50-year-old Irish priest, until lately one of five foreign residents at a suspect Zen study centre. James Melville's *The Wages of Zen* (Secker & Warburg £4.95) opens with a formidable, wrily humorous promise, to be triumphantly fulfilled. Drugs and the Red Army Faction are at the bottom of things, but it is the rippling surface that delights – good news that a second Otami is on the stocks. Janwillem van de Wetering's *The Maine Massacre* (Heinemann £4.95) works its own particular vein of unexpected, near-surreal comedy as the elderly commisaris, Jan, chief of Amsterdam's CID, arrives in icy Maine – closely followed by his dandyish Detective-Sergeant – to sort out the affairs of his recently bereaved and tiresome sister. The Netherlanders are soon knee-deep in a pile of earlier corpses, up to their eyes in off-beat suspects. In his new hooded coat, the commisaris cheerfully admits to looking like Dopey: he is anything but. John Wyllie's *To Catch a Viper* (Hale £4.15) once more boasts the massive West African medical man and detective, Dr Quarshie, here confronting a grand political conspiracy with the help of a boy, an old cripple, ample Auntie Zumeira and a blend of commonsense, bravery and guile. The local colour is persuasive.

Strongly recommended: Reginald Hill's *Pascoe's Ghost* (Collins £4.25), one long and six short stories of masterly contrivance; Peter Brennan's *Sudden Death* (Fontana 95p), or how to succeed at tennis by being a bigger shit than your opponent, with a slamming set-piece finale; and, pick of paperback reissues, A. Alvarez's *Hunt* (Corgi 95p), a gambling-prone nonentity caught in an undeserved daymare of guilt; William McIlvanney's *Laidlaw* (Coronet 85p), hard-hitting Glaswegian cop after a killer and after; Ed McBain's *Long Time No See* (Pan 80p), Carella and Meyer tracking a stabber of blind folk, a sick title for a very slick addition to 87th Precinct chronicles.

George MacBeth

Gut Kicks

Thrillers: Genesis and Structure of a Popular Genre by JERRY PALMER *Arnold* £8.95 and £4.75

Jerry Palmer argues that a thriller requires two components: a hero, and a conspiracy. The conspiracy will be presented as a major crime, usually against property. The hero may be a detective, a spy or a private eye. Mr Palmer connects this hero with the Western cowboy who carves a civilisation out of the wilderness. He also notes how the thriller is indebted to the Gothic novel for its 'sense of sheer malevolence'. These distinctions are fun, and provoke thought.

Unfortunately, Mr Palmer leans with a heavy hand on his material. He is too anxious to establish credentials. A bibliography which includes his own *Form and Meaning in the French Classical Theatre* (Ph.D thesis, University of Southampton, 1972) might be accused of an inflated comprehensiveness. But his exclusions are too generous to be allowed simply as the product of an eccentric taste. It just won't do to offer us Ian Fleming and Mickey Spillane as in some way 'paradigmatic' of the post-war thriller without providing some examples from the work of immediately earlier writers, like Ambler and Greene whom we might suppose these modern giants to have been reacting against.

I feel doubtful, too, about the wisdom of lumping American and British thrillers into the same bag. The bulky shadow cast by *The Sun Also Rises* surely looms behind all the great American crime writers, from Raymond Chandler to Ross Macdonald. The sensuous, punchy style of Spillane could easily be seen as the most striking parody of Hemingwayese we have had. There is nothing quite so stripped and close-focus as this in the British thriller, where the comparable influence might be seen as the dry facility of that public-school commando, Evelyn Waugh. The British thriller certainly appears class-conscious where the American tends to be grass-roots. Can you imagine James Bond enjoying a drink with Mike Hammer? At a bar in Key West, maybe. But not in his club. What could be seen by the unsympathetic as the vulgar assertiveness of the American thriller might be gauged by its employment of the first-person pronoun as a way of shoe-horning the reader into the action. In British thrillers, readers are always presumed to be gentlemen, and a gentleman doesn't like an elbow dug in his ribs, even when some bounder is coming through the door with a Mauser in his hand.

As a fey Scot, with a canny eye for all English attempts to do down the native genius, I began to suspect after a while that Mr Palmer might be in the pay of some anti-Scottish cartel. What other explanation can there be for his failure (though he is sound on the Celtic Doyle) to outline the essentially manic and weird nature of the grand thriller tradition? The ingredients were first blended, I suspect, in the witches' cauldron of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. It was there that the soft underbelly of Puritanism was first allowed to flirt its obscene invitation before the tight lips of an early 17th-century commercial society. Literature was going to be the best escape we could find from the dominating profit motive of the mill-owners. Unfortunately, when the first surge of drama died, what literature gave us was something as repressive as the chimneys and the counting-houses, the chaste, well-stayed prose of the mainstream 19th-century novelists. Apart from poetry, there were only the popular genres to keep the Highland richness alive and crawling: from Frankenstein to Dracula, the thrills, the real gut kicks, were to come from the bottom, the books everyone despised and nobody failed to read.

But a respectable ambition had to be added from somewhere. Mercifully, the 19th century brought one doomed hero to clap to the masthead. Who else but the best-selling, half-Scots George Gordon? From Byron, the liberator of Greece, the cruise to Stevenson, the king of Samoa, was a short one. After Stevenson, who but Lord Tweedsmuir? Indeed, it was Buchan's Richard Hannay who really inaugurated the 20th-century thriller as we know it. The Scots have always been avid for position, however vicarious, and this line from Byron to Buchan exemplifies the fantasy urge for power and moral glory which has characterised the thriller writers.

Not surprisingly, thrillers have always (despite Mr Palmer) had a lot to do with sex, albeit usually sublimated. There has often been a fair maiden locked in a tower, and a knight in a white Bentley to drag her free. These elements are becoming less symbolic than they were. The most innovative recent thriller was Charles MacCarry's *The Secret Lovers*, in which the whole structure of the plot depended on the close analogies between passion and secrecy. The Achilles heels of the heroes in Graham Greene's *The Human Factor*, and John le Carré's magnificent *The Honorary Consul* were their womenfolk, and their unbreakable commitment to them. The spy story, in fact, has become a major branch of the literature of love.

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Julian Symons

A Severed Head

Cruelly Murdered: Constance Kent and the Killing at Road Hill House by BERNARD TAYLOR *Souvenir Press* £6.50

The classic murder mystery of fiction, in which the suspects are shut up in a ship, plane, house or theatre in such a way that the murderer must be one among a closed circle of suspects, hardly ever occurs in fact. The murder at Road Hill House, Wiltshire, in 1860, is fascinating partly because it conforms closely to classic fiction. On a June night Francis Savill Kent, aged 3 years 10 months, was taken from his cot in the nursery and murdered in a privy some twenty yards outside the kitchen door. His death may have been caused by suffocation, but certainly his throat had been cut so thoroughly that the head was almost severed from the body, which for good measure had also been stabbed.

Who killed Savill? The principal suspects were the child's father Samuel Kent, Savill's 16-year-old step-sister Constance, who was one of four surviving children from a previous marriage, and the nurse Elizabeth Gough. The county police were both inefficient, and overawed by Mr Kent, who was an inspector of factories earning £800 a year while Superintendent Foley of the Wiltshire police got less than £80. When Kent told Foley that he could have access within the house only to the nursery, kitchen and drawing-room, Foley accepted it. Not surprisingly, the police made little progress. Scotland Yard's Jonathan Whicher, the most famous detective of the day, was called in, and soon fixed on Constance as the killer.

Bernard Taylor, who has had access to the Home Office file and to police records, gives us some of Whicher's notes, and they show a shrewd and rational mind at work. The members of the 'second family' were at best ignored and at worst humiliated by their stepmother, who before the first Mrs Kent's death had been the governess. Constance was the most rebellious of the children, had run away from home, and was suspected of having stripped Savill of his socks and bedclothes a year earlier when he was unwell. There was a history of mental illness on her mother's side of the family. In addition, one of her nightdresses was missing, and she was thought to have destroyed it to remove bloodstains. Constance was arrested, the inadequately presented case against her was utterly destroyed, and she was freed to popular acclamation. Whicher left the district in disgrace, and retired soon afterwards.

Since the murderer was not Constance it was thought to be Samuel Kent, the nurse, or the two together. Samuel had a strong amorous reputation (200 female servants came and went from his home in four years), but he was a man of consequence. Elizabeth Gough, however, was arrested. But the case against her hardly existed and she was quickly discharged. There the matter rested for almost five years. Early in 1865 Constance, who had spent the time abroad, and had become an ardent Christian, confessed her guilt. She said that the motive had been to avenge her mother, who had always been treated contemptuously by the second Mrs Kent. The death sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life, and she spent twenty years in prison.

So what's the puzzle? Well, there are baffling and indeed almost incredible details in the confession, relating to Constance's use of a razor and to the way in which the crime was committed. The present book is outstandingly the best about the case. Mr. Taylor has made good use of the files opened to him, and is the first to trace Constance's life after prison. He shows convincingly that she went to Australia using the name of Ruth Emilie King, became a nurse and eventually had her own Nurses' Home, and died there at the age of 100. His solution involves Mr Kent's discovering Savill's body in the privy (he had been shagging Elizabeth Gough in the spare bedroom while Constance took the boy from the nursery, stifled and stabbed him) and cutting the throat of his much-loved dead child in a foolish attempt to link the death with other local cases carried out by the same means. This seems to me psychologically and in other ways incredible. A reviewer's solution must be that of commonsensible, unromantic Jonathan Whicher. Constance did everything, with no help from any other hand. The inconsistencies? Well, she confessed five years after the event, had perhaps forgotten some things and could not bear to put down others, but there can be no serious doubt that she told the truth. Bernard Taylor gives us all the facts. He doesn't give us the right solution, of course: but then we had that more than a century ago.

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PETER STRAUB'S

GHOST STORY

'Straub is particularly good at the spooky search: slow probes into haunted and haunting houses, compelling the reader up unimaginable stairs and into unspeakable cellars. Once again, as in *Julia*, sharp knives and children are brought shockingly together. Here over the problem of evil, fiction converges on reality. Convincingly, if stomach-churningly, Peter Straub has managed — like the best myths — to have it both ways.' *New Statesman*

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Gerald Rabkin

Breaking the Barrios

Zoot Suit, the first Mexican-American play to make it to Broadway, closed recently after a disappointing one-month run. Despite an expensive promotional campaign aimed largely at New York's considerable Hispanic community, it failed to repeat the overwhelming success it enjoyed in Los Angeles, where it originated. Still, its emergence on Broadway represents a social and theatrical breakthrough. Add the recent proliferation of 'Nuyorican' (New York Puerto Rican) plays around town, and it's clear that Hispanic-American theatre is breaking out of its *barrios* east and west in much the way, for example, that Jewish-American theatre artists and composers did when they moved from Second Avenue to Broadway in the Twenties and Thirties.

But in the Seventies the journey is more treacherous. Hispanic-American theatre, like Afro-American theatre before it, is enmeshed in a paradox. It wants and deserves its share of the American pie, but it is also aware that much of its vitality springs from its role in forging cultural pride and self-identity, in its special relationship to its communities. It was born, after all, in the anger and radical protest of the Sixties as an alternative theatre.

Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit*'s author and director, was the founder and guiding spirit of El Teatro Campesino, a group born not in aesthetic isolation, but on the picket line. At the end of 1965, when Cesar Chavez launched the historic Delano Grape Strike, Valdez, who was born in Delano, returned to his birthplace as an organiser for the farmworkers' union. Drawing on a theatre background nurtured at San Jose State College and in the radical theatre circles of the San Francisco Bay area, Valdez decided to form a theatre group from among the striking workers. For the next two years, El Teatro Campesino performed at union meetings, in the fields, in protest marches in support of the farmworkers' cause. The group's short, *commedia*-like pieces, called *actos*, were consciously agit-prop, created collectively by company members directly involved in *la huelga*. Valdez' politics created an aesthetic which rejected white western (*gavacho*) proscenium theatre in the search for forms authentic to the Chicano experience. Alongside the *actos*, the group devised a complementary form, *mitos* – mystical fables rooted in the symbols of *La Raza* – the Indian, Spanish, Roman Catholic iconography of Mexican culture.

Anyone who saw El Teatro Campesino in such pieces as *La Carpa de Los Rasquachis* was instantly struck by their quality. Actors and musicians, under Valdez' inspired guidance, created pieces that were simple but complex. With brilliant economy of means, the Campesinos created a nuanced fusion of visual and aural imagery which never lost sight of defined political goals. Here was a simple ballad-like theatre with a voice magnificently its own. But Valdez, in responding to Gordon Davidson's commission to write a play for Los Angeles' Mark Taper Forum, was well aware that an evening of *actos* and *mitos* would not satisfy middle-class theatrical expectations. The result was highly successful in L.A., which responded with local pride to the familiarity of the play's subject matter and the immediacy of its concerns. But in New York the reception was less enthusiastic; no surge of immediacy conquered a sense of the play's essential naivete.

Valdez based his play on an important sequence of events in Chicano history, the notorious Sleepy Lagoon Murder Case and the Zoot Suit Riots that followed during World War II. After a gang fight in which one person was killed, the L.A. police rounded up hundreds of young Chicanos and charged twenty-two of them with one murder; seventeen were convicted in a mass trial which reeked with racial hysteria, fanned by the aggressive style of the Pachuco youth who wore the flamboyant zoot suit with its outrageous drape shape and reet pleat as a gesture of defiant extravagance. Eventually, with the help of white liberals, the convictions were overturned, but the episode remains a trauma as well as a victory in the Chicano experience.

Valdez's strategy in *Zoot Suit* is to seize upon the social and theatrical utility of the symbol of El Pachuco, to make him emblematic of Chicano isolation, defiance and survival. El Pachuco is a figure of ironic power and ominous strength, a sardonic guide to a shunned social reality. When *Zoot Suit* focuses on El Pachuco, when it brilliantly recreates the world he represents, when it vividly summons up, through song and dance, the era which created him, it is vibrant and alive. But when El Pachuco recedes and we confront a twice-told tale of melodramatic victimisation, *Zoot Suit* becomes static, awkward and predictable.

Valdez the playwright lets down Valdez the director. Remove the colourful trappings, remove the powerful presence of El Pachuco, and what remains is a social melodrama very much in the style of such Twenties' and Thirties' plays as *Gods of the Lightning*, about the Sacco-Vanzetti case, or *They Shall Not Die*, about the railroading of the Scottsboro boys. In searching for an accessible dramatic form, Valdez has, knowingly or not, presented us with a series of caricatures: the rebellious, good-hearted slum hero (John Garfield could have played him), the racist judge, the vicious cops, the well-meaning but patronising liberal defenders. They all talk in language that echoes with predictability.

East coast Hispanic theatre is also embarking on a journey into the American theatrical mainstream. Here, of course, it is not Chicano but mainly Puerto Rican American, or as its dominant group has felicitously dubbed itself, Nuyorican or New Rican. As it began to emerge in the past decade, Nuyorican theatre often followed black theatrical models, a natural indebtedness since Puerto Ricans and blacks share the bitter realities of the urban ghetto. Increasingly, however, Nuyorican culture has been finding its own voice: in theatre, it has meant affirming the performance power of its musical heritage. The pulse of *salsa*, with its blend of African, Spanish and West Indian rhythms, the compulsive urban beat of rock and disco, have been seized on as a means of liberating Nuyorican theatrical energies. These energies are not as yet fully channelled; they are greater than the theatrical and dramatic forms which contain them, but they are insistent and irresistible. *Sancocho* by Ray Ramirez and Jimmy Justice, for example, presented recently at Joseph Papp's Public Theatre, is not quite a musical play, not really a revue; it's a loose kaleidoscope of Nuyorican experience which uses song, dance, jazz, comic vignettes, social protest, romance in its quest for form. It moves from conventional musical comedy to sardonic satire, from serious social questions to light-hearted blackouts, from ballet to ethnic dance and ritual to Hollywood love duets. But vitality breaks through infectiously and its looseness makes a definite social point.

Ramirez begins each act with a jam session in which black and Hispanic musicians stop playing to engage in caustic exchanges about the differences in their musical styles. Each accuses the other of being more indebted to the white European tradition. Clearly, Ramirez is saying: Let's respect both what we share and what makes us different. Like our music, we Nuyoricans are a stew – *salsa* is the spice, *sancocho* the ingredients. Let's enjoy the diverse sources of our energy.

Infectious vitality also characterised *The Hustle Dance Contest*, which recently played at the Nuyorican Poets' Café, a converted bar on the Lower East Side of New York which serves as a centre of Nuyorican cultural activity. Here is Nuyorican theatre at its source, basking in the warmth of community affection, taking energy from sympathetic relatives, friends, guests, passers-by – even crying children. In its strong reciprocal relation with its audience, *Hustle Dance Contest* reminded me of the early work of the Campesinos.

Wisely, Miguel Loperena, who conceived and directed the one-act fable, built precisely upon what he had to work with. Out of the specific realities of their lives, the young members of El Grupo Cemi, a local folk dance group improvised, with Loperena's guidance, a simple tale of growing conflict between two close friends competing for victory in a hustle dance contest. Loosely based on the myth of Cain and Abel, the play ends with a symbolic confrontation in which the friends' hostility is defused by affirming their cultural roots: they meet in a stirring traditional *Baile de Machete* which converts their anger into art.

The heart of the play is dance, from traditional *bomba* and *plena* to disco hustle. 'Hustle' is a resonant image: it names a popular urban dance, but it also represents one alternative of ghetto life. You can refuse to trade hours for dollars and live by your will and wits, by hustling. As Miguel Algarin, editor of *Nuyorican Poetry*, has observed: 'Struggle is a hustle and the struggle-hustle is experienced as a shifting balance: sometimes you get away with it, other times you are caught.'

Gerald Rabkin is Professor of Drama at Rutgers, Theatre Editor of *Soho News*, and author of *Drama and Commitment*.

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Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Soul Music

The Undiscovered Country by ARTHUR SCHNITZLER *Olivier*
Welcome Home, Jacko by MUSTAPHA MATURA *The Factory, W9*

Schnitzler wrote *Das Weite Land* in 1911, not long before the collapse of that house of cards which liked to dignify itself as the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He set it in and around a summer villa outside Vienna, city of swank, glitter and grandiose facade. And he peopled it with sophisticates equally adept at concealing their dalliance and pretending not to notice that of others. The impression left by the play's long, languid opening is of hand-painted butterflies skimming past crystal mirrors to land on wax roses; but, like everything else, it is a false one. Even the sham is sham, because behind the lacquered surfaces skulks what Tom Stoppard, in a characteristic double-entendre, has translated as 'the undiscovered country'.

In the play's cartography this is the human soul. At any rate, that is how it is explicitly defined by the sour and melancholic hotelier to whose Alpine Ritz some of Schnitzler's playboys and playgirls scamper in search of new adventures. Years ago he betrayed his wife and left her, realising, with a puritan candour rare in Viennese society, that 'there was nothing she could count on any more, no possibility of trust between us'. How is it, he now asks, that a man can simultaneously love and deceive, worship one woman yet amuse himself with others? What's this unruly nation-state that he's doomed to carry around inside himself? Why such unpredictability, inconsistency, and bloody civil strife between id and superego? The 'undiscovered country' is primarily, then, the same troubled territory that was already being reconnoitred by Schnitzler's compatriot and admirer, Freud: it is also, of course, the one imaginatively anatomised by Hamlet, the after-world from whose bourn no traveller returns. Death dogs much of Schnitzler's work, almost as if it were limbering up for its grand assaults upon the Austro-Hungarian armies and Hapsburg civilisation itself; but in this play more than most.

All this brings us to Friedrich Hofreiter, a main character who combines the psychological inscrutability of the Sphinx with the destructiveness of the Grim Reaper himself. One moment, he is accusing his long-suffering wife of responsibility for the suicide of a friend whose advances she had, in his view cruelly, rejected; the next, he is shooting dead the lieutenant upon whom she has unwillingly taken pity. Whether the poor woman spends her favours or hoards them, the result is the same: death and blame. No wonder she ends the play aghast at a husband whom circumstances have exposed as a liar, hypocrite and murderer, a dedicated philanderer who fails to tolerate in others what he expects to be understood in himself, a baleful flibbertygibbet who takes serious things lightly and light things seriously. The reason he gives for duelling with the lovelorn lieutenant isn't love or jealousy, commodities for which he feels mainly contempt. It is the logical one, given the world of appearances in which he moves and has his spectral being: he 'will not be made to look a fool', especially by a younger man. So overwhelming is his narcissism, so slim his grasp of other people's emotional reality, that he can actually chat brightly with his victim's mother, who knows nothing of her son's death, reassuring her in his fake-friendly way that 'our home is yours' and hoping she'll come again. The social mask is everything or, as he himself puts it, 'it's illusion, all illusion': a judgement on Vienna 1911, maybe even on London 1979.

The play is somewhat loose and discursive, especially in the early stages, but it is manifestly the product of an inquisitive, complex, formidably moral intelligence; and Dorothy Tutin, Michael Bryant and Emma Piper, among others, prove Stoppard's adaptation to be as actable as we had expected. William Dudley's lush sets, which come complete with a hotel lift that actually glides skywards, may seem calculated to bait those of us who fuss about extravagance on the South Bank; but it must be admitted that for once a degree of visual flamboyance is justified by both milieu and theme. A pity, then, that the one substantial failing should occur plumb centre of Peter Wood's elaborate yet incisive production. Hofreiter is, on the face of it, as evil a character as dramatic demonology has recently invented; but there is, as he himself insists and his author plainly believes, a part of his psyche that is unreachable, untouchable and therefore unjudgeable. Now, John Wood smiles, laughs, and plays the dangerous dilettante with that febrile sense of irony, that charismatic glee, and all those other qualities whose pungency and bite have justly made him famous. But he does not pause, reflect, turn his eyes inwards, and inspect the insect-life behind the social bravado. In short, he makes too little effort to explore Schnitzler's 'undiscovered country'; and that, after all, is what the play is supposed to be about.

Mustapha Matura is an open-minded, instinctively generous writer, and *Welcome Home, Jacko*, like much of his work, is in a very literal sense mistrustful of obvious blacks and whites. The youth-club worker who hurries off to the police when a troubled West Indian bloodies her nose is black, and the one who tries desperately to deflect her is white. There are, however, objections to be made. The first is that this crisis comes very late in the play, after an inordinate time has been spent creating an atmosphere of drift and establishing the characters of the unemployed adolescents whose days consist mainly of power-struggles on the table-football machine and aimless quarrels about Marcus Garvey, Haile Selassie, and the Ethiopian utopia. The second is that the switch of tone, wryly compassionate up to this point, is too sudden and awkward. The Jacko of the title, who has just completed a sentence for rape, disarms the knife-wielding troublemaker and proceeds to attack him and everyone else for dissipating their energies on sentimental Rastafarianism: they must learn the realism he acquired in prison and join the battle against racism. The play ends with its fist clenched and raised, a justified gesture no doubt, but not a totally plausible one.

However, the play managed to rile some Rastas in the audience, one of whom loudly accused it of inciting whites to laugh at blacks, and stormed out of the youth-club attic in which it was being performed. An unjust condemnation, but not one that need discourage the Black Theatre Cooperative, who are presently touring it round London. On the contrary: if their aim is to provoke excitement and argument in the West Indian community, they are clearly succeeding.

Art

John Spurling

Hangmen

Summer Show 1 *Serpentine*
The Artist's Eye *National Gallery*

One of David Redfern's paintings in the Serpentine's Summer Show 1 is called *Hanging Howard Hodgkin*. In the context of Redfern's other work – realistic, urban, painted in flat, dusty colours with a hint of surrealism and a dash of deadpan social comment – one might expect the subject to be, however obliquely, an execution. *Smash the Front*, for example, is a view through the slogan traced on the misted windows of a bus into the interior of a second bus drawn up alongside, where a hunted-looking coloured man sits surrounded by NF graffiti. *Strife* is a reminiscence of last winter's lorry-drivers' strike. *Serious Assault* shows the entrance to a London station platform, with two trains waiting to leave, a ticket-collector and a Wanted poster, whose mere presence infects the whole ordinary scene with unease. Redfern belongs, as his modern version of Ford Madox Brown's famous painting *Work* suggests, to the tradition of Victorian narrative painting, but he also happens to be one of the assistants at the Serpentine gallery and *Hanging Howard Hodgkin* is after all simply a picture of one of his colleagues at work, lining up Hodgkin's small, bright abstracts along a white wall.

Perhaps the painting is a sly dig at an abstractionist whose work can be so accurately reproduced in miniature by a figurative artist, but more likely it is a tribute. Hodgkin, like Redfern, has chosen to work within a well-defined tradition; he too uses domestic-sized canvases and prefers understatement to the grand gesture; he too, though he might not appear so at first sight, is a narrative painter after his fashion. Behind the flimsy division between abstract and figurative painting, both artists demonstrate the continuing fertility of paint and canvas as a visual language.

This is palpably the message of Hodgkin's show at the National Gallery, where he in his turn has become the hangman and showman to other artists. Two of his own paintings are included, but discreetly separated from and very much played down by comparison with the main display, for which the Special Exhibition Room has been transformed into a kind of giant jewel-box, lined in deep blue. Hodgkin, who is a National Gallery Trustee, has not simply selected favourite paintings, he has restored and revitalised what they have to say. On the end wall hang the four fragments of Manet's *Execution of Maximilian*, brought

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together again on one canvas as they were when Degas owned them, so that although the unlucky Emperor himself is still mostly missing, one can see his hand clasping that of his faithful general Miramón and giving an extra dimension of particularity to the central and previously almost abstract spectacle of the firing party. The National Gallery must be very insensitive if it ever parts these fragments again.

On the ceiling hangs Tiepolo's ravishing Venus, floating amongst clouds, drapery and cherubs as she rescues a child from the arms of Time. The painting is usually shown vertically at a slant, destroying its sense of space and air and making Venus seem more available than she ought to be. Seen from below she is the quintessential eighteenth-century goddess (at once idealised and fleshy, *lointaine* and come hither) and if it were not for the arrangement of plants in the middle of the floor might easily have visitors swooning there in heaps. Velasquez's great panorama of a royal boar-hunt has had its glass and frame removed, Mantegna's hypnotic *Introduction of the Cult of Cybele at Rome* has been cleaned, Delacroix's *Baron Schwiter* has been hung at floor level and Renoir's pair of blousy, slippered dancers perform their languid measures behind banked pots of red geraniums. In the pale yellow alcove reserved for his own paintings, Hodgkin has included another intruder, a wonderfully complicated and animated Moghul painting of an enclosed garden with a bevy of ladies, from a private collection.

Do these heterogeneous, mostly dramatic incidents give any insight into Hodgkin's own rather obscure and personal scenes, with their enigmatic titles (*Dinner at Smith Square* and *Mr and Mrs E.J.P.*)? Only in that they make one freshly aware of the self-containment of paintings and their individual demands on the attention. Whatever happened over dinner at Smith Square or in the company of Mr and Mrs E.J.P. might perhaps be retailed as a literary anedote, but has here been translated into terms of colour and form, its intensity displaced from the human actors to their richly decorated setting, as though the rooms themselves, with their carpets, wallpapers, doorways and *objets d'art* had become the Proustian distillation of an experience. We have become too saturated with 'shows', with *oeuvres* and statements. Hodgkin reminds us, both as artist and selector, of how much one frame can contain in the way of 'story' and of the almost infinite range of storytelling devices(including in his own case a *trompe l'oeil* frame) open to the skilled painter.

Eleven other artists are showing with David Redfern at the Serpentine. The most immediately entertaining pieces are Frank Nelson's small working models. The photograph of Nelson in his studio makes him look like Pinocchio's creator, but his style is actually somewhere between Monty Python and the seaside postcard: a man falling down a loo, a lion putting his head in the tamer's mouth, a judge who opens his robes, a flasher who opens his raincoat and so forth. The most original and resonant works in the exhibition are Michael Mason's large wooden, architectural sculptures, placed outside the gallery, in Kensington Gardens. Mason too, with the help of his titles (*Agincourt, Ravelin, Bosworth Field*), sets scenes and tells stories: one can walk round his beamed and bolted stockades as if visiting the blackened relics of some savage assault and resolute defence.

Films

John Coleman

Worlds Apart

The Europeans (U) *Curzon*
Moonraker (A) *Odeon, Leicester Square*
That Summer! (AA) *Classic, Oxford Street; Odeons, Kensington, Westbourne Grove* and *Chelsea.*

Purists foamed at the mouth when Peter Bogdanovich made a film of *Daisy Miller* some five years ago. The consensus was that a sledgehammer had been taken to a butterfly. Imagine, then, my surprise at being obliged to render a minority verdict: I thought it was pretty good, even where it took liberties of invention. But – to be honest – the original slim novel had always struck me as thoroughly minor James. *The Europeans*, published a year earlier than *Daisy Miller*, in 1878, shares similar preoccupations, famously the confrontation of Old World experience with New World innocence, but is – though still short – an altogether more substantial work, a lucid, wittily shaded near-masterpiece.

So it was with considerable relief this time round, when word got out that it too was to be translated to celluloid, that one registered the names of its prospective makers – that happy trinity comprising director James Ivory, producer Ismail Merchant and writer Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. This would be their eighth film together since 1961 and if anyone could bring the delicately nuanced Jamesian procedures relatively intact to the screen it had to be this very special group of collaborators. In the event, they have come close, so wincingly close to a triumph.

The Europeans, set in the countryside around Boston in 1850, has its own twist. The couple of the title are, in fact, a thoroughly Europeanised brother and sister, feckless, charming Felix – with a small talent for art – and Eugenia, the Baroness Münster morganatic wife of a German princeling. Out of the blue, they descend on their wealthy, staid, God-fearing New England cousins, the Wentworths, and nothing can be the same again. Eugenia (Lee Remick), her marriage on the brink of dissolution, is gently prospecting new possibilities and the younger Felix (Tim Woodward) is content to come along for the ride. Grave Mr Wentworth (Wesley Addy) has two daughters, Gertrude (Lisa Eichhorn) and Charlotte (Nancy New), and a rather uncouth son, Clifford (Tim Choate). Completing the principals are Robert Acton (Robin Ellis), a rich neighbour who has travelled in China, his pretty sister Lizzie (Kristin Griffith of *Interiors*), and stern Mr Brand, a Unitarian preacher much preoccupied with Gertrude's moral welfare and more.

It is Gertrude, with her marvellously brimming, hesitant, mischievous smile, who immediately succumbs to the terrible glamour of the 'foreigners', and Miss Eichhorn's performance is not merely an attractive and utterly credible *tour de force* – it is the absolute anchor of the occasion. 'There must be a thousand different ways to be dreary and sometimes I think we make use of them all,' she confides in Felix with her unshakeable candour, already in love with him. The line is straight from James and Mrs Jhabvala displays even more than her usual ingenuity in reworking a text: one may have doubts about the wisdom of introducing a ball, given by Mr Acton (who is quite aware of the equivocal charms of Eugenia), into the local sobrieties, but it allows of a satisfactory deal of condensation, the focusing of several crucial incidents and scraps of dialogue disseminated in the book.

James Ivory maintains a fine, swift pace without a suggestion of hurry; his actors deliver their difficult good, (unfashionable rectitude, high moral sensibility countered by easy gaiety, 'cosmopolitan' standards of conscience and behaviour) as if we lived in a world still in touch with such strengths and niceties and were indeed capable of comprehending them – this the greatest stumbling-block to an appreciation of James today; and, though the novel intimates a climate of spring, Ivory and his lighting photographer Larry Pizer turn the forced exigencies of shooting in late autumn to glorious advantage, with the turbulent reds, golds, russets and greens of New England flora adding a natural richness to the large simplicities of the Wentworth mansion and the smaller white house lodging the Europeans. In the upshot, Felix manfully secures his Gertrude while Eugenia – in a dying fall – fails with an over-nice Acton, last seen on horseback tidily surveying the other pairings of lovers.

I have to say that Eugenia, anyway, is the weak link in the whole chain. Even to talk of her as a 'link' should be impossible. James, with the novelist's benefit of describing his characters' inner emotions and motivations, makes her presence felt pervasively: to Gertrude, she has a 'mysterious impressiveness' and great trouble is gone to in establishing the deceptive quality of her worldly charm, suffering by transplantation to America but yet a bit valiant. Lee Remick is a splendid actress and grasps her few chances to display a febrile allure, that vestigial dignity. But she is not there enough and an imbalance results: of 'her ugly face and her beautiful smile', nature can allow poor Miss Remick only the second and by this one stroke of miscasting some essential distinctions between elegance and delicacy, spiritual crudity and hard-won frankness fly out of the window: out – at least – of the Jamesian frame.

Lewis Gilbert's *Moonraker*, the 11th Bond if one omits *Casino Royale* (and let's), has tremendous space-shuttle hardware, a metal city in the heavens controlled by evil billionaire Drax (Michael Lonsdale, wasted for the umpteenth time), the inexplicably up-and-coming Lois Chiles as a CIA helpmeet to Roger Moore's handsome Plastic Man 007, and a laugh or two more in Christopher Wood's script than the last one. 'Look after Mr Bond. See that some harm comes to him', purrs Drax and a closing crack about re-entry brought the house down at a packed press show. Jaws (Richard Kiel) goes finally decent; pretty Corinne Cléry dies too soon; much of the spectacle is truly spectacular. *That Summer!* is a hugely wholesome and dullish flick 'tailored for the young, regular film-going public' (sure recipe for wholesome absenteeism), neatly directed by CFF Harley Cokliss – he made *The Glitterball* – and played above the call of a tired script by pert, sexy Julie Shipley.

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Opera

Peter Conrad

Freedom and Necessity

Die Schweigsame Frau *Glyndebourne*
Die Schweigsame Frau *HMV* £13.10
The Rake's Progress *Covent Garden*
The Last Temptations *Sadler's Wells*

After its romantic inflation into the all-encompassing art-work of the future, opera survives into the reduced, sceptical 20th century either by shame-facedly parodying its own presumptions or by hardening into intransigence. Hence, on the one hand, the insecure self-parody of Strauss's *Die Schweigsame Frau* (1935) and the Mozartean mimicry of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* (1951); hence too, on the other, the redoubtable defiance of Kokkonen's *The Last Temptations* (1975), included in the Finnish National Opera's brief season at Sadler's Wells.

Strauss's hero is a symbol of the composer's self-disgust: a retired seaman to whom music is an abomination, and who longs for sedative silence, just as Strauss, conducting his earlier uproarious scores like *Salome* and *Elektra*, urged orchestras to play the music softly, because it had been composed so cacophonously. Stravinsky's hero is a symbol of the composer's ingenious self-liberation: a rake who longs for, and in his dissipation and final madness attains, freedom from his entrapment in time, just as Stravinsky manoeuvred himself out of his place in musical history and renounced his own modernity by adhering to the redundant styles of the past.

Die Schweigsame Frau is Strauss's queasy self-recrimination. Its music is condemned in the opera itself as noise-pollution, its singing as persiflage or rant: it begins with the barber objecting to the housekeeper's tuneless, senseless babble. Morosus has devised a regime based on silence, and on contempt for opera. When his nephew reveals that he has married into an opera troupe, Morosus deplores the shame of it, and disinherits him. Having been duped by the opera company, he eventually submits to attending their performances – as a penance. Strauss's score alternates between volleys of unbearable clatter and discord (rattling doorknockers, banging sticks, a tumult of drums, trumpets, bells and cannons) and intervals of anaesthetised silence (after Morosus's escape to bed, or before his final benediction, in which he gratefully declares – now that the opera is mercifully ending – that music is most beautiful when it is finished). The action too is a nauseated parody of opera. The emotions the characters affect for the intrigue against Morosus are as gratuitous as their clockwork coloratura. Aminta, the allegedly silent bride who plagues Morosus by turning into a maniacal virago, hates her appointed role, begins to feel compunction for her victim, and performs her tantrums half-heartedly. However, her genuine emotion of remorse, like Morosus's genuine affection for her, is an embarrassment in the inauthentic, theatrical world of opera. Strauss's self-condemnation even glances at his own notorious mercenariness. The sweetest music in the opera is that made by money.

At Glyndebourne, John Cox has treated this undeserving work to a witty and intricate production, and Andrew Davis, conducting, skilfully apologises for its protraction and its often fatuous din. Marek Janowski has also recorded it in Dresden for EMI. Glyndebourne's Morosus, Marius Rintzler, is a grim, pug-faced gnome, an Alberich resentful of life; on the recording Theo Adam makes the character a broken-down Wotan, imperious but ineffectual. Krisztina Laki plays a sweet, angelic Aminta, carefully registering the character's revulsion from the plot and controlling her vocal hysteria; her Dresden counterpart is Jeanette Scovetti, an acid-voiced little termagant. Wolfgang Schöne's barber on the recording is a Germanic Figaro, but at Gyndebourne Peter Gottlieb interestingly shows the character to be dry, severe and disapproving, sharpening his razor with sinister intent: a cruel satirist not a jovial factotum.

Parody in *The Rake's Progress* isn't shifty and self-doubting as in Strauss, but an impudent, libertine challenge to time. The self-quotations in Strauss's score impugn his own past, but Stravinsky's hero is ejected from the past by his three wishes and thrust ahead into an exhilarating future of gratuitous action. Stravinsky's musical parodies construct that arena of contingency and moral freedom in which the existential rake of Auden's libretto flourishes. Elijah Moshinsky's new production of the work at Covent Garden is miraculously inventive, although I believe it to be mistaken in its emphasis. Moshinsky treats the opera with a bleak moral realism. The stage, with the steep receding perspective of its ramp, its oppressive wings and its infernal trapdoor, is constructed to enforce the regressive penalties of Tom Rakewell's choice.

Tom in this production becomes a critical version of the young Auden, disparaging inhibition and guilt but sickening gradually – as he wearies of his brazen, promiscuous liberty – and subsiding from courageous atheism into obsequious Anglican orthodoxy. Robert Tear as Tom acts and looks like Auden. In the opening pastoral he is Auden at Christ Church, donnishly introverted, hunched over his books while Anne inanely trills. In the brothel, the slumped recipient of a blow-job from one of Mother Goose's doxies, he is Auden in Berlin, experimenting with his own sexual faithlessness: hence Tom's song, 'Love, too frequently betrayed'. At breakfast in the next scene, he is a grotty, hung-over, unshaven Auden, puffing prissily at a fag. In the madhouse he is, perhaps, the drink-numbed Auden of the last years, reduced to self-repetition and self-loathing.

Audacious and brilliantly executed as the conception is, it misrepresents the work, for it defers to the retributive moral of Hogarth's pictorial series, which Auden was disputing. Auden's rake is both an existential philosopher and an honorary American: Auden explained his own migration to America in 1939 as a gratuitous act, the choice of perilous freedom which the compulsory ideological dreams of Europe had suppressed. Europe during the Thirties had become, he thought, a morbidly closed society, while America remained bracingly open, authorising the 'voluntary behaviour' into which Tom is released. Auden's first operatic hero, created in collaboration with his fellow-exile Britten, is the legendary Paul Bunyan, who confers this existential freedom on modern Americans by relieving them of material cares and vanquishing economic necessity. Tom is Bunyan's heir, answering to Bunyan's final appeal for revolutionaries and poetic dreamers as 'disturbers of public order', whose divisive, discontented intellects will induce a fortunate fall in the otiose paradise of rural America. Tom's actual destination when he leaves the Truloves is not Georgian London but modern New York. *The Rake's Progress* is an amoral fable (the pious formulations of its epilogue are as irrelevant as the prosy self-congratulations of the survivors in *Don Giovanni*) which Moshinsky has reconverted to morality.

Colin Davis, who conducts the production, has also remarked that the work makes the characters pay, shackling them to the consequences of their deeds. But Auden's text on the contrary celebrates randomness and self-controversion, and Stravinsky's score flaunts a similar irresponsibility. Even Anne's high C is an act of metaphysical insolence: top notes in opera, Auden believed, were assertions of liberty, defiant expressions of human wilfulness. Helen Donath, making a long overdue debut with the company, has the vocal ease for this testing note, and is a delectable Anne. Donald Gramm's Nick Shadow is a dour, sour devil, an infernal bureaucrat like the shabby fiend of Kierkegaard's theology.

Though *The Rake's Progress* seems to be parodic pastiche, like the later operas of Strauss, actually it is intransigent, deviously defending its right not to belong to its time. Kokkonen's *The Last Temptations* is even more resolute in its independence. Its hero, aptly, is a man of uncompromising will – Paavo Ruotsalainen, an itinerant evangelist who led a religious revival in early 19th-century Finland. The opera is about the dying Paavo's pitiless judgement of himself. Integrity to him means desertion of his family and stern castigation. On his grave, he says, should be planted a prickly tree, because he was a prickly fellow. But he possesses the courage of his fanatical self-exaction, and courage too is the distinction of Kokkonen's score: he is brave enough to write not only the modishly tense and dissonant music which transcribes Paavo's mental state but healing passages of lyrical peace and beatitude like the death of Riita, the preacher's wife.

The intransigent hero is Martti Talvela. His Paavo is a neurotic giant. That immense body shuffles disconsolately about the stage, stumbles in prophetic inebriation or apes with violent comic contempt a goose-stepping academic procession. That granitic voice has both liturgical authority (Talvela's most imposing characterisations are all spiritual potentates – Dosifei in *Khovantschina*, Pimen, Gurnamanz, Verdi's Inquisitor or Padre Guardiano) and a helpless, plangent vulnerability, which makes Paavo at once an object of pity and of terror. It is one of those performances which justify opera and account for its continuation in this unprepossessing century.

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Sport

Russell Davies

Call-Signs

With Kevin Keegan apparently racing up the record charts and Isaac Stern called in to help sell the BBC's tennis season ('Do you see any affinities between tennis and music, Mr Stern?' The maestro paused just long enough for the phrase 'Of course not, you fool' to flash through all our minds), it seems a good moment to fall for the BBC marketing ruse of the season. This is the LP *Sporting Themes*, for which they are dunning us to the tune of £3.45 – the best tune on the disc, some might say. Signature tunes, of course, tell us in the first instance more about TV than about sport; but since TV these days is increasingly apt to tell sport how it should see itself, there must be useful clues here to the various futures which games and the media are contriving between them.

Tradition, it seems, does not play a great part in image-building. Just one sport, snooker, is content to play upon an image and an atmosphere created in the pre-TV age. Winifred Atwell's unmistakably tinny *Pot Black* theme, *Black and White Rag*, is the only tune here admitting to the small-time origins of a game, and the knockabout saloon level at which it has been commonly enjoyed. Even *Crown Green Bowls*, which in most of our minds is played out against the distant strains of Reginald Dixon's organ (with ukulele obbligato by George Formby), aspires on TV to a sinister thrumming atmosphere, as established by an electronic wa-wa farrago called *Soul Riff*. Black Pudding country is similarly disowned by the Rugby League BBC-2 Trophy, whose sig. is a frantic number called, with misplaced optimism, *Ticket to Rio*. International Show Jumping, not unexpectedly, clings to the classics, though its hold (the Presto from Mozart's *Musical Joke* as arranged by Waldo de los Rios) is less than sure.

Musical onomatopoeia naturally flourishes: the themes for both *Grandstand* and *Sportsnight* – the latter in what sounds like a sadly muddied version – feature chattering motifs in imitation of teleprinter and typewriter emphasising the newsiness of it all. But the Test Cricket theme, which I had confidently supposed to be a specially worked-up piece based on the rhythmic beercan bashing at West Indian games, turns out to be *Soul Limbo*, a 1969 number by Booker T. and the MGs. It is not easy to find a theme here witty enough to try to imitate the behaviour of sportsmen themselves or their accoutrements; although *Rugby Special*'s music does have a splendid prop-forward lurch to it, and there is something of an airy ballistical boyngg about *Chase Side Shoot Up*, the call-sign of golf tournaments, despite its not obviously applicable galloping rhythm.

So rather to my surprise, I find that my favourite among all these is *Surf Rider*, the wonderfully dated and unmarine guitar instrumental with which *Wimbledon Match of the Day* is ushered in. The mists of time have already begun to corrode this (mono) recording, but that is the point. The music, such as it is, belongs to its own era: it's not trying to hammer home the present-ness of the present day, or announce the dawning of a new age of supermen. *Surf Rider* is not the sound of striving, but the sound of an archive digesting the day's achievements.

Television

Julian Barnes

Sheikhed Up

On the *News* (BBC-1), Prince Charles, with no more than two kilos of best Victorias in his mouth, was seen addressing the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation. 'My impression is,' he remarked, 'that the ordinary British bloke is outstanding in every way.' He prefaced this by saying that the ordinary British blokes he'd come across might, of course, have been pulling their fingers out extra hard because of the Royal presence. It wasn't a bad irony that the *News* was immediately followed that evening by *The Pythons* (BBC-1), which included nostalgic footage of the Upper Class Twit of the Year Race. HRH, one reflected, might have the usual trouble clearing the row of matchboxes, and he'd probably have a game stab at pulling the bra off the dressmaker's dummy; but what he's obviously cut out for is the final event of the Race: shooting yourself in the head.

Friday's first TV showing of *And Now For Something Completely Different* (BBC-1) was a more persuasive tribute to ten years of Monty's team than the lazy, indulgent celebration of *The Pythons*. The camera tracked round the six comics as they worked on their *Life of Brian* in Tunisia and eavesdropped fawningly on their extremely ordinary table-talk. John Cleese gave a being-interviewed-while-being-made-up interview, which may or may not have been intended to mock a show-biz cliché; Eric Idle gagged wildly at every passing camera; the others sat around in the sun, twittered, rehearsed, corpsed a bit, and generally proved how much comedians need scripts. At one point Idle noted of himself, 'I've got a parody mind really' (he meant, we hope, a mind which delights in parody); the comment seemed to have a more general application, and perhaps explained why they weren't funnier when starting from scratch.

We discovered that the omni-squelching foot in the *MPFC* credits was the foot of Cupid from Bronzino's *Venus, Cupid, Time and Folly*; that Graham Chapman was homosexual and had now got over his drink problem; that Cleese thought *Fawlty Towers* 'a private thing' which would never catch on; but we discovered a great deal less than expected about the genesis of *Python*. Why, for instance, didn't anyone interview the show's midwife Barry Took, to whom everyone paid tribute (admittedly, it's not such fun interviewing people cheaply in London when you can interview them expensively in Tunisia). Why didn't anyone interview Spike Milligan — all sheikhed up on location – instead of merely letting him gag into camera in the style adopted by Idle. But at least the programme ended with a memorable line, from a reflective Michael Palin: 'After a day's shooting,' he mused, with a smile which dared us not to believe him, 'We'll go back and have a drug-based orgy of some kind.' Of a parodic kind, if anything, one felt.

Mavis – Wanting to Know (Thames) confers on one of TV's best interviewers one of the most switch-off titles imaginable and some of the worst opening credit photos (Mrs Nicholson, trying to act quizzical, looks merely woozy and worried). If she wasn't on good form with her latest guest, Iris Murdoch, it was probably because she knew the novelist's work too well and admired her too much (too much for the good of the interview, that is: sceptical ignorance is often a useful starting-point). So Miss Murdoch had to face questions – yet again – like 'Life is pretty odd in your novels, I would say' (to which she sagely replied, 'I think life is pretty odd in life'), and 'Do you feel hopeful about the way life's going?' (a brief summary of her answer to that would be 'Yes and no'). Otherwise, Miss Murdoch talked more good sense about, and in defence of, her art than I've heard for ages from a writer on TV. Apart from exuding a heartening confidence in the novel and its multiple functions, she restores a basic belief in the value and efficacy of art; not just 'high art' either, but books one wouldn't immediately think of going to the barricades for, like *Treasure Island*. Asked whether her fondness for the book wasn't escapist, she replied, 'I think if something is a good work of art, it can't be called an escape'.

Victorian photographs have had a pretty escapist boom in recent years. Refreshingly, Gus Macdonald's *Camera: Early Photography* (Granada) offers astringent proof that you can introduce lots of old prints without diving off into nob-spotting nostalgia. He approaches the archives with just the right degree of scepticism about the early photographers, their prejudices, commissions, and subjects: Dr Barnado's famous 'Before and After' cards, for instance, were often faked up a bit – and his favourite model of dishevelment, Katy Smith, had never actually been a match-seller. In particular, Mr MacDonald is cautious about the responses *we* should have to his photos. The shots themselves, he rightly

Douglas Dunn

From the Gutter

I speak to the man who sweeps the gutter
With his long-handled brush
Of efficient, sturdy bristle.
'Not even my wife has spoken to me
Since I took this job,
But there was no other job they could
give me.'
Ah, ah, ah, melancholy man,
Whose eyes are forever turned towards
Torn-up pieces of love-letters,
Week-old residue of vomit, matchsticks,
And wet tobacco exploded from its paper,
I know you are dreaming of autumn
And its wholesome litter,
Of leaves that speak to you
Of discarded things,
And speak to you through strangers' lips
Of the four seasons of rubbish,
With borrowed mouths chattering
Among dropped coins and filter-tips.

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maintains, are largely mute, and the emotions we naturally draw from them are likely to be inapposite: as he points out, the Victorian photographer who caught that tattered waif in such a fetching street-corner pose was in all probability focusing on the building behind.

The photographs of Jean Mohr, who collaborates with John Berger and took the pictures for *Pig Earth* (BBC-1), couldn't be more different: they convey neither Victorian condescension nor posturing self-expression, but work done on behalf of their subjects. The resulting portraits are austere, direct, affectionate and beautiful. Berger's text (fiction, reminiscence and sociology intercut) on the impending extinction of peasants in the face of the multinational agribusiness was equally spare and tender. He declines to be nostalgic, but celebrates the peasant's way of life with an enthralled seriousness which conveys his (quite possibly correct) assumption that if he doesn't record and explain the European peasantry now – imaginatively rather than sociologically – then it soon won't be around for anyone else to record.

Although Berger's anti-charm camera manner at times seemed, well, just a bit too charming, and the mixture of Mohr's stills and Berger's straight-to-camera stance a bit reminiscent of a lantern-slide improvement lecture, *Pig Earth* remained a fierce and stylish lament.

Weekend Competition

No 2572 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

The festival season has started. Could we have some reports, please, by famous locals: Crabbe on the Aldeburgh, Kipling on Glyndebourne, Burns on Edinburgh, Belloc on Brighton, Sterne on York. 150 words prose or 16 lines verse. By 13 July.

Result of No 2569 **Set by Joyce Johnson**

We asked for octets about rivers or mountains with four or more syllables.

Report **by Fat Jeff**

Well, you certainly know what Brahmaputra rhymes with, don't you? The filthier entries in that area have been passed to the DPP. We had fears of a thin, miserly postbag on this one, but you surprised us: the comp folder bulged, it glowed, it positively shone with energy and humour. Well done; a Wellington apiece, and two consolatory quid to Martin Fagg for his first four lines:

'As we strolled up Vesuvius,
We talked of Wilde and Bosie,
And the influence of Vitruvius
On the films of Joseph Losey.'

When ill-fated Krakatoa
Blew its top in '83,
Like some monster cracker-thrower
It bombarded land and sea;
Many an alpaca-grower
Had to pack it in and flee,
Making tracks for Dacca, Goa,
Lhasa, Gaza or Capri.

STANLEY J SHARPLESS

The crest of the ridge Appalachian
Marks a great psycho-social divide,
For the Yankee, with justification,
Views his morals with something like pride.
In particular, for procreation,
A Yank takes a girl for a bride,
While an Okie, without hesitation,
Will take a wild pig in mid-stride.

SYMIAN HEEK

The crater at the top of Paricutin
Is a nice secluded quiet little spot.
It's the ideal place to put that final boot in,
It's where to hatch that perfect murder plot.
There you'd easily dispose of a Rasputin
Even though you were a rotten lousy shot;
I'd bet that up there even Andrew Newton
Could not have failed to nobble Norman Scott.

G.F.M.

I am that Rio Orinoco
That Sir Walter R. describes,
Where explorers stick to cocoa
And take care to offer bribes;
Where ethnologists go loco
Through experiencing bad vibes,
As they film the more rococo
Sex rites of riparian tribes.

PETER PETERSON

I am Old Man Mississippi,
full of Time and Mud –
you must all be pretty nippy
if I ever flood!
Swim in me? You would be dippy!
Foolish flesh and blood
would end woeful, dead and drippy!
keep your distance, bud!

GAVIN EWART

Smiling on the Mississippi,
Sipping ice-cold sarsaparilla,
Every bubble hisses: 'Zippy!'
But his hand slips off the tiller,
Hardly manages a sip, he
Thinks his stomach's a flotilla
And as the liquid fizzes up he
Smiles and goes on feeling iller.

JOHN FULLER

The mighty Brahmaputra
Flows swiftly through Assam,
Past many a farm and through tre-
Mendous forests of yam,
Only an army boot re-
Mains of the fool who swam
It reading the Kama Sutra
And eating strawberry jam.

BARNEY BLACKLEY

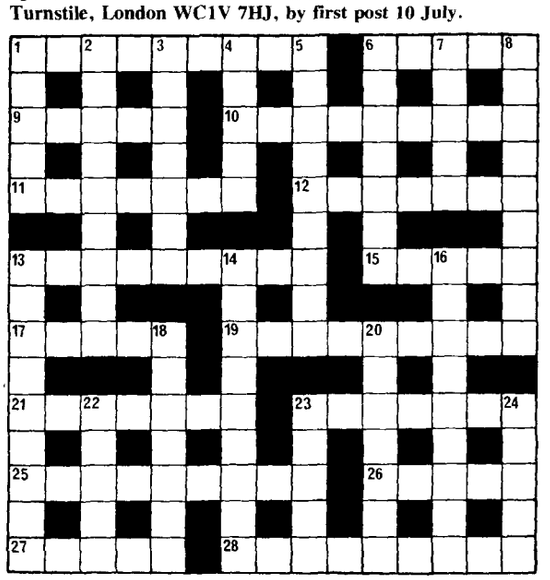
On the banks of the Monongahela
There's a most unusual zoo
Where a semi-retired conger-eeler
Keeps a golden eagle that's blue;
There's a snake who's a skilled mango-peeler
And a twenty-foot singing gnu
In a cage with a much longer gila
And a bear whose sire was a ewe.

PETER ALEXANDER

The chess column has had to be held over.

Weekend Crossword 1307

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1307, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 10 July.



ACROSS

1 There would be reduced opportunity with no foreigner in the bus (9).
6 Group of a hundred found in a city (5).
9 Advantage of one being held in something which flows back (5).
10 Bring her a change as an announcer (9).
11 Her gift may be found in the cargo (7).
12 Departed before a penny is presented (7).
13 Battle rations for the bird (9).
15 One among the deprived has to readjust (5).
17 Although a hundred a man was not idle (5).
19 Game for which a pawnbroker's sign is needed? (9).
21 Those most closely related live in the home (7).
23 Have meat and drink to give encouragement (7).
25 Metal which makes clubs match (9).
26 'What passion cannot music —— and quell?' (Dryden) (5).
27 Struggles to utter last words after anaesthetic (5).
28 Illumination for good player before match (9).

DOWN

1 Refuse to cut an inch off the bird (5).
2 A strange beast holds us to be degrading (9).
3 Asserted the old just about measure up (7).
4 Buddhist with rising sun on his headdress (5).
5 Soldier holds the East to be not spiritual (9).
6 Not so long if the right beer is brewed (7).
7 'Then imitate the action of the ——' (*K. Henry V*) (5).
8 The historian makes a great man point to us (9).
13 The relative in the cast is showing off (9).
14 The bird mixes a lot with brass (9).
16 Having offspring is far superior to sport (9).
18 Clothing shows guards have lost war (7).
20 Endanger the devil before the money turns up (7).
22 Fragments of writing about a preposition (5).
23 Queen's place for woman with degree (5).
24 Entertainment in theatre attracts audiences (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1306

S	E	A	S	C	A	P	E		C	H	A	P	E	L
C		S		L		E			E		E		A	
H	O	S	P	I	T	A	L		C	A	R	M	E	N
E		E		M		R			D		M		D	
M	E	T	A	B	O	L	I	C		A	R	I	E	L
E		S				Y		A		C		C		E
				F	I	G	U	R	E	H	E	A	D	S
O		A		I		A		B		E		N		S
F	E	D	E	R	A	T	I	O	N	S				
F		M		E		E		N				K		A
S	T	O	M	A		S	I	P	H	O	N	I	N	G
T		N		L				A		P		N		N
A	N	I	M	A	L		E	P	H	E	M	E	R	A
G		S		R				E		N		M		T
E	X	H	U	M	E		D	R	E	S	S	A	G	E

Prizewinners to No 1306

M. B. Jameson (Iffley)
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Application form from:

International Voluntary Service

Section OS 77A,
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LAW PROJECT

needs a

SOLICITOR

with three years' Practising Certificates (o.n.o.) to work as part of a team in the West End of Newcastle. The Project offers unique opportunities to work creatively on community issues including housing and employment. One solicitor and co-workers are already in post on the Law Project which has an Independent Management Committee and works closely with five workers on the West End Resource Centre. Further information and application form from: **Benwell Law Project, 87 Adelaide Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE4 8BB. Tel: (0632) 731210. Applications to be in as soon as possible.**

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London Co-op Political Committee

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Application forms and Conditions of Employment from: **The Secretary, LCS Political Committee, 116 Notting Hill Gate, London W11 2BR.** (To be returned not later than **20 July**).

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Tutor-Organiser
in West Cumbria

full time post (present scale £3,330-£6,558). Applicants should have an interest in the developing of Women's Education and a degree in a suitable teaching subject.
Further details from the **Administration Officer, WEA, Northern District, 51 Grainger Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Tel: Newcastle (0632) 23957.**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LICENSED HOUSE MANAGERS

Regional Organisers

Regional Organisers are required. Applicants should have experience or knowledge of trade union negotiations and procedures.
For details and application form please write to: **Mr Harry Shindler, National Secretary, NALHM, 9 Coombe Lane, Raynes Park, London SW20 8NE.**
Closing date for applications: **Friday, 13 July 1979.**

THE ALBANY

an independent Social Action Centre in a deprived area of S.E. London urgently require a

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Application form and job description from **Susan Power, The Albany, Creek Rd, London SE8. Tel: 01-692 0231.**

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Apply in writing to: **The Editor, Environmental Data Services Ltd, Orchard House, 14 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BU, or phone 01-222 3684.**

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Hammersmith & Fulham

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Application form from Mr K. P. Hyde, Head Teacher, Swaylands School, Penshurst, Tonbridge, Kent T11 8AU. ADM/S/566.

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For further details please write to the Warden.

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Applicants must possess a PhD or equivalent in Political Science and have at least three years teaching and research experience at University level. The appointee will be expected to teach both undergraduate and postgraduate students and participate effectively in postgraduate supervision work and other Departmental activities. Clear specialisation in two of the major sub-areas of political science will be essential.

LECTURERS

Applicants should have a PhD or equivalent in Political Science. Some experience in University teaching and/or research will be a definite advantage. The appointee in each case will be expected to have speciality in, and a capacity to teach at least two of the following sub-disciplines: International Relations, Political Theory, Methods of Political Inquiry, Comparative Politics, Political Sociology and Political Economy.

Salary scales: Senior Lecturer K£2,988 - 3,984 p.a. Lecturer K£2,016-3,312 p.a. (K£1 = £1.27 sterling). Family passages; FSSU or SSSF; non-contributory medical scheme; subsidised housing/housing allowance; various allowances. Detailed applications (2 copies) with curriculum vitae and naming 3 referees to be sent direct to the Registrar (Recruitment and Training) University of Nairobi, PO Box 30197, Nairobi, Kenya by 12 August 1979. Applicants resident in the UK should also send one copy to Inter-University Council, 90/91 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0DT. Further details may be obtained from either address.

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The organisation requires a chief executive to be responsible for its administration, staff relations and management committees, to fulfil the legal obligations of a company secretary and to ensure the efficient and successful day-to-day management of the council, its projects, its finance and its staff.

Applicants should be resourceful, energetic and have a commitment to working with volunteers and voluntary organisations.

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Local Authority conditions of service apply.
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Informal telephone inquiries are welcome. Further details and application form from **David Pugh, Organising Secretary, Harlow Council for Voluntary Service, Bentham House, Hamstel Road, Harlow, Essex. Telephone: Harlow 32146/37647.**

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(TWO REQUIRED)

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The main responsibilities which the successful candidate will have will be the expansion of the Association's role in Health and Safety; the monitoring of developments; liaison with various organisations, and interpreting of existing and proposed legislation.

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Application forms are available from **The General Secretary, National Graphical Association, Graphic House, 63-67 Bromham Road, Bedford MK40 2AG.** To whom they should be returned by **Friday 3 August 1979.**

AGE CONCERN GREATER LONDON

INFORMATION OFFICER

required to collect, organise and disseminate information about work with the elderly in London, especially in the voluntary sector. Work will include writing information sheets and regular newsletters. This is a new post, initially for a three-year period. The information officer, who will have a part-time assistant, will be responsible for setting up a new information system. A qualification or experience in librarianship or information science is preferred.

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 97 No. 2519
29 June 1979
Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ
Tel: 01-405 8471 Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London WC1

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Theatres

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ICA EVENTS, The Mall, SW1. 7 & 8 July 'Men without Qualities! Philosophy and Literature in Austria and Germany'. Details and tickets: 01-930 6393.

Poetry

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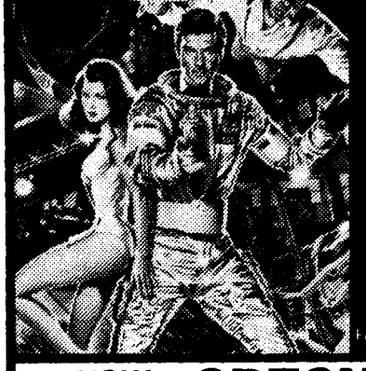
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